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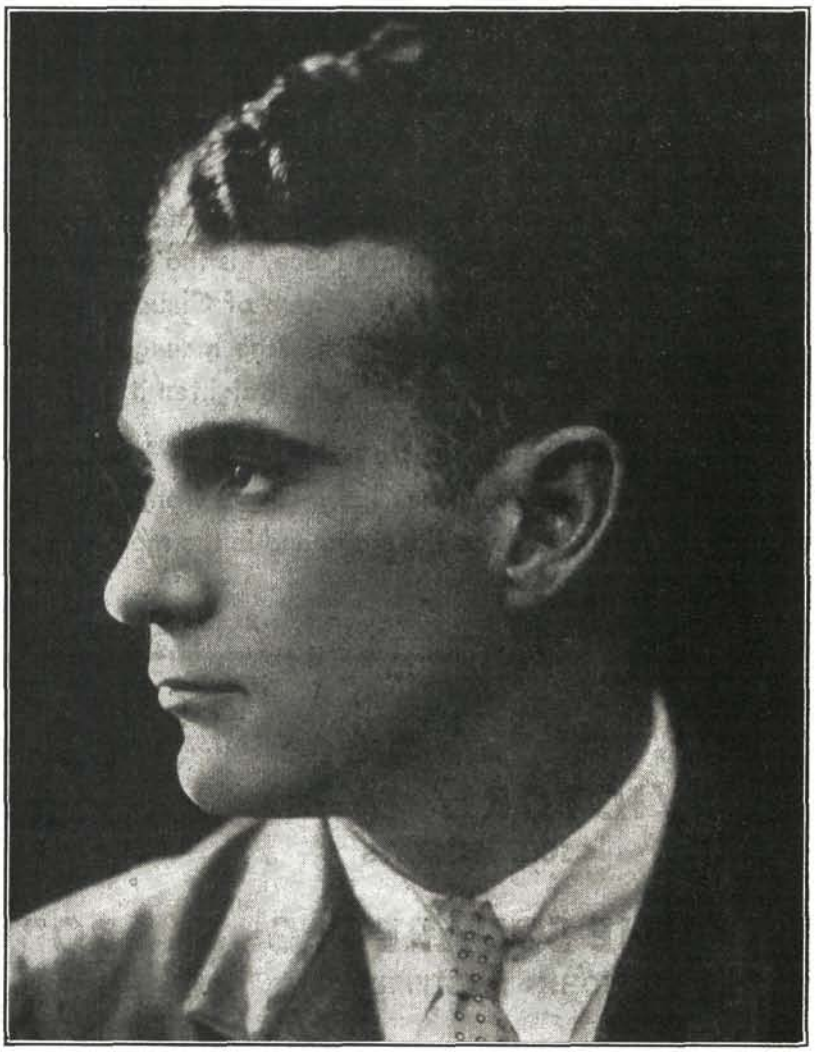

EDGAR SNOW

"He was the first individual, Chinese or foreign, to run the blockade formed by cordons of National Government troops around the Reds and return with a mass of newsworthy material" . . .

(See page 6)

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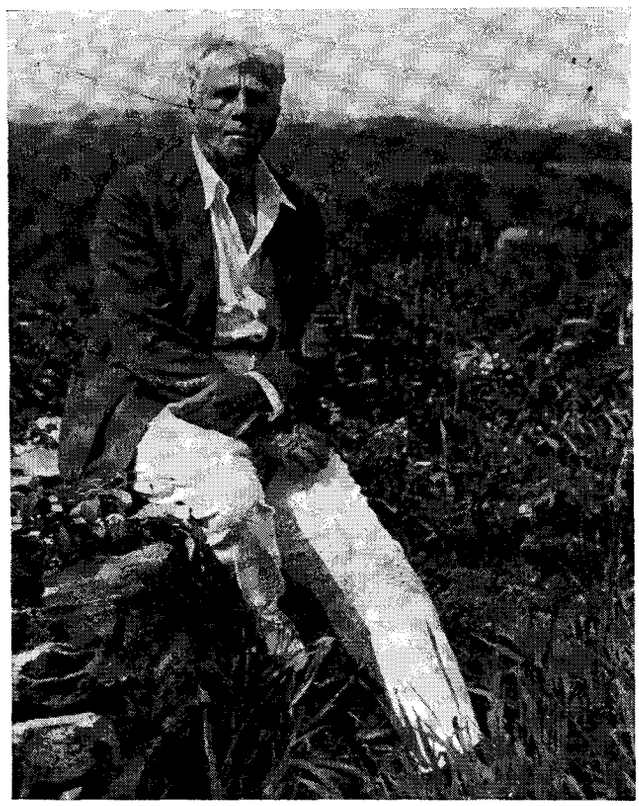
The Critics and Robert Frost

BY BERNARD DEVOTO

MR. RICHARD THORNTON'S anthology, "Recognition of Robert Frost,"* will be useful to admirers of Mr. Frost's work and to everyone who is interested in the generation of American literature of which that work is the highest achievement. It is most useful in that it brings together a representative selection of early notices and reviews and many biographical details and personal sketches never before collected. It is less useful as criticism. Intended as a tribute on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of "A Boy's Will," it naturally omits the derogation which two groups of critics have written in obedience to fashion, and what it contains is a miscellany of opinion, rather than an articulated attempt either to examine Frost's poetry or to judge it in relation to its time. Nevertheless, this shapelessness works out usefully in the end. If it makes indifferent criticism it makes excellent archeology, and it enables the reader to contemplate in tranquillity the fetishes and mores of literary thinking over a generation.



ROBERT FROST

Not all the criticism in the book makes sense to anyone who tends to keep his mind fixed on poems and let theories go, who thinks of what Mr. Frost has written rather than what this or that theory would have preferred to have him write. Probably only Mr. Untermeyer, Mr. Lewisohn, and Mr. Kreymborg would appear in an anthology which set out to describe what Mr. Frost's poetry really is. The rest is divided unequally among Ph.D. analysis, the cosmically vague, and various kinds of nonsense. Of the last, Amy Lowell's review of "North of Boston" is easily the first—though Ezra Pound's presbyopia would have run it close if Mr. Pound had used as much space as he was currently giving Latvian and Esthonian geniuses in *Poetry*, or as he had given Rabindranath Tagore a year or so before. When Miss Lowell reworked her piece in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry" she brought it down from the higher to the middle strata of the inane, but in the review you get the pure stuff and it is one of the most idiotic pieces written about poetry in this generation. It is screamingly silly. Nothing approached it until the publication of "A Further Range" impelled a group of muddled minds to tell us about Mr. Frost without bothering to read him. At that time Newton Arvin and Horace Gregory crowded Miss Lowell hard, only to lose in the end to Mr. Blackmur. His piece in the *Nation* may not be quite the most idiotic review our generation has produced, but in twenty years of reading criticism—oh, the hell with scholarly reservations, Mr. Blackmur's *is* the most idiotic of our time. It is one of the most idiotic reviews since the invention of movable type. The monkeys would have to tap typewriters throughout eternity to surpass it, and Mr. Blackmur may regard his immortality as achieved.

But already I am falling into the habits of criticism. It is not true that Messrs. Blackmur, Gregory, and Arvin did not read "A Further Range." They read it carefully, but interposed between their eyes and the page were systematic theories about the nature of poetry. They could not see what this poetry is because they knew in advance what it ought to be. That has been the principal trouble with the criticism of poetry throughout our generation. All literary criticism is basically an exercise in autobiography, but poetry provides far fewer restraints than prose to keep it in touch with the objective world. In the criticism of poetry, the abstract and systematic theory is usually everything; what a poet actually writes becomes nothing more than a solution into which the critic thrusts his litmus paper. Less than that, even, for critical theory is not like litmus paper which, after all, is capable of rendering two colors, but a mathematical scheme something like the benzene ring. Usually a critic finds in poetry just what mathematical prediction has told him he ought to find there, or he verifies a mathematical prediction that he won't find there what he ought to find. The striking thing is that not honest human prejudices or preconceptions but mathematical processes have told him. He has not got to his judgment by instinct, he has worked it out: he knows by logic, which is far stronger than experience, what poetry ought to be, and so it doesn't much matter to him what poetry actually is.

This subjective absolutism is abundantly illustrated in Mr. Thornton's book. Something like a third of the critics quoted see Mr. Frost escaping from reality into nature or idea or distance or the unknown. Another third assert that

* *RECOGNITION OF ROBERT FROST. Edited by Richard Thornton. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1937. $2.50.*

Next Week

MEDICAL MAGIC
By DAVID DIETZ
Reviewed by Mabel S. Ulrich

WINTER IN APRIL
By ROBERT NATHAN
Reviewed by William Maxwell

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he never escapes but instead holds fast to the fact which is the sweetest dream that labor knows. Mr. Freeman says that he has a larger share of the English tradition than any other American of his time; Mr. Untermeyer says that "North of Boston" is one of the most intensely American books ever printed. Miss Lowell says that he has no sense of humor: half the essays say that humor is part of the cell-structure of his work. (Miss Lowell also says that he has no imagination, that his New England is decadent, that he is incapable of subtle undertones of expression or meaning.) To Mr. Munson he is the purest classicist of our time, to Mr. Lewisohn a pure specimen of the naturalistic revolt; Mr. Blankenship calls him a pure realist; Mr. Freeman finds no rebellion in him. Mr. Pound finds his poetry a bit slow, and Mr. Newdick finds it strained to the bursting point with dramatic tension. Mr. Pound says it is not "accomplished"; Mr. Muir decides that it is as deeply, severely, and intricately wrought as one of Plato's dialogues. (But Mr. Munson says that Frost lacks the common sense deliberately aimed at that Socrates achieved, whereas three or four find that he elevates common sense into metaphysical vision.) And so on: he has practically no emotion but he has intense and passionate emotions, there is no color in him save only black and white but he has a magnificent color sense, he is minor but major, he is all on the surface but you have to look for him in the depths. . . . Meanwhile Mr. Frost has remarked that he thinks of poetry as the renewal of words and that a complete poem seems to him one where an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found its words—and has gone about his business. You can get out of that just as much as you can get out of it. Thoreau also spoke in such phrases, and critics have succeeded in identifying the hound, the bay horse, and the turtle dove to which he once alluded. As you might guess, it turns out that the turtle dove is a girl who threw him down.

Mr. Thornton's book omits the two fashions in mathematical analysis which rejected Mr. Frost's poetry some years after its first full fame, but does contain the four essays from the English battle line that so embarrassingly repealed the rejection. Those two fashions were mutually contradictory but yet mystically one, and a glance at them will be instructive.

Mr. Frost's poetry was first awarded critical approval because it was thought to be in revolt against something, at a time when poetry must be in revolt. (To be sure, the best way was to revolt as Imagism, while Amy Lowell was active and Mr. Pound—who has invented many of the fashions and most of the theories that rationalize them—was still an Imagist.) A period of anarchy followed, when poetry must be so many different things that it could be practically anything and criticism could still accept Mr. Frost, but order was again imposed with a metamorphosis of Mr. Pound and the rise of Mr. Eliot. Poetry now must not be anything like Imagism and must not even revolt, but must be the kind of poetry that Mr. Pound or, more purely and quintessentially, Mr. Eliot wrote. This kind of poetry took a lot of explaining—about a hundred pages of theory to one page of text—but a brief statement of its imperatives was contained in Mr. MacLeish's "A poem should not mean, But be." A poem, that is, must not crudely carry "meaning"; it must communicate by direct experience. To be sure, Mr. MacLeish presently doubled on his theory and has ever since done his damnedest to make his own poems mean rather than be; and at the height of the imperative Mr. Eliot supplied footnotes and explanatory treatises on his work which showed that it was at least intended to mean a lot, whereas Mr. Pound has published glosses on his work which prove it so full of meaning that you are lost unless you are equipped with anthropology, philology, half a dozen other sciences and pedantries, a half-knowledge of half the ancient and modern tongues, Major Douglas's economics, and the theory of Fascism.

Obviously Mr. Frost's poems neither looked nor sounded like Mr. Eliot's and Mr. Pound's. If Mr. Eliot's way was the right way to write poetry, then it followed that Mr. Frost's poetry must be pretty bad or pretty minor, and with that mathematical demonstration his decline among the theorists began. But just when a new crop of critics bottlefed on Mr. Eliot's theories (which, happily, have had little effect on his poetry) had mastered this mathematical integration of a new phase of symbolism, another imperative suddenly shattered it to bits. Mr. Eliot was discovered to be not only an antique esthete approximately on a level with Richard LeGallienne, Lionel Johnson, Austin Dobson, or the Sweet Singer of Michigan, but also decadent, Catholic, and dangerously fascistic as well. The only right way to write poetry now was to revolt in it against private ownership of the means of production and saturate it with the emotions, experience, and aspirations of the workers of the world, though you

(*Continued on page* 14)

On Hearing a Bach Fugue

By MERLE G. WALKER

TAKE hence the sound, but leave the counterpoint.
The anatomy of music is more strictly made
More stern than tone. Here is a pattern laid
More intricate than the union of the joint
With sinew, and more accurate than bone
Set in its socket. The separate note
Alone is vague, and each a monotone
Hung in its vacuous nonentity,
Until the bond of law and symmetry
Welds it to music like a world of stars,
And the great sweep of sound
Is fettered and is bound.

Thus Chaos brooded on itself and slept
A timeless sleep within the arm of space,
Till slowly on immensity there crept
The Word, articulate, and there was grace,
And love, that goes precisely, seeking its own,
Seeking a region it may circumscribe,
And faith, that hears behind the monotone
The theme repeated, and the cadence known,
Hearing the word spoken
And the law, unbroken.

All things indefinite find necessity,
The earth, its sun,
Ulysses moves toward his Penelope,
And no day done,
But some bright star beholds its satellite.
The note remembers its fugue, and sleep its night.
And the soul of man discovers a private place:
This is its planet, this its appointed space.

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Smooth Brown Secrecy

TALE OF BALI. By Vicki Baum. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

GIVE a born storyteller a handful of photographs, a few months' residence, and the romantic legacy of a small tin trunk full of rumpled documents, and he will spin for you a yarn about the place and the people. Vicki Baum is a born storyteller, and her particular tin trunk came from a Dutch doctor on the Island of Bali. The result is a long tale about the southern part of the island, its Radjas and its laborers, its cockfights and its lepers, its dancers and its wars. As in "Grand Hotel" she presents to us many individuals all of whom move in a loosely concentric pattern, all of whom eventually touch one another's lives at fundamental moments. There is an "Arabian Nights" quality to the book, and that faint inescapable flavor of spuriousness which inevitably accompanies any attempt by a foreigner to convey by idiomatic twist the effect of simple alien language and unspoiled savage faith. The latter is, however, the technical handicap Miss Baum deliberately set herself, and her skill and gusto make her place and its people almost real in spite of it.

Jacket design, "Tale of Bali."

Bali is now the literary and sartorial fashion. The magnificent pictures and photographs in Miguel Covarrubias's recently published book about the island serve to make vivid the people in Vicki Baum's tale. The books should be read concurrently, and "Tale of Bali" does not suffer in the comparison. Vicki Baum has made an attempt to guess what thoughts, what joy or suffering, lie behind the smooth brown secrecy of Balinese faces. Only a Balinese could with authority quarrel with the result; her guess is probably as good as anybody's, and she has made an absorbing story, besides conveying, sometimes with very moving effect, the reality of existences as remote as Martian lives.

See page 22 for biographical note on Vicki Baum.

In Pursuit of Honor

THE THIRD HOUR. By Geoffrey Household. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MAXWELL

THIS is a long and somewhat romantic first novel, with North and South America and Europe for its scene. The title refers to a monastic order conceived by an adventurous Spaniard named Manuel Vargas and founded by him with the help of Toby Manning, an English toy salesman. The others who make up the order—a Chilean laborer, an Austrian countess, a Jew, a Russian cavalry officer, an English clerk—are chosen by Manuel and Toby from among their associates, because in them the quality of honor is instantly recognizable.

According to Toby Manning, the honorable man was killed in the Great War, and now without him the world is growing more and more vulgar, concerned more and more with getting what it wants. The ideals implied in the word honor still exist, of course, and here and there one can find a man who holds them. Manuel and Toby and their associates are ready to devote themselves to finding these isolated noblemen and, through the Order of the Third Hour, giving them leisure and power. In that way Manuel and Toby hope to preserve the good things of life against their natural enemies—communism, fascism, frantic money-making.

The year 1938 is probably a good one in which to examine the monastic ideal and to see what if anything it has for present-day society. As set forth in Mr. Household's novel, it is far from satisfactory. The same thing must be said for the novel itself. For one thing, Manuel Vargas has an unfortunate resemblance to Anthony Adverse, and Toby Manning, though attractive and pleasant, does nothing to establish his own nobility of mind and heart. The author takes that nobility for granted, and the reader has to do likewise, excusing as best he can Toby's theft of $500,000 from the government of Mexico in order to establish The Third Hour. As for the other characters, they are heterogeneous without being really important. One does not find it easy to identify oneself with any of them. Nor does one finish the book convinced that any good can come of Mr. Household's abbey.

Kay Vaughan

NAOMI JACOB

Good Light Novelist

FADE OUT. By Naomi Jacob. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

IN her excellent "Time Piece" Miss Jacob showed that she knew how to create character and make the reader like it, sometimes in defiance of real-life probabilities. This useful talent appears again in her new story, which is a sufficiently independent sequel, introducing a few of the people we met in the earlier novel. Shrewd but likable Claudia Bower, become something of a matriarch, dominates the book and her young granddaughter Jane Pinto, though the latter is a cinema star and the nominal heroine. Wilful and a bit spoiled, the girl hesitates about marrying the playwright Martin Sharrett, obviously chosen for her by destiny and the author. Instead, she lets her affections stray in the direction of her unreliable, attractive Russian stepfather, Alex Verschoff. In the end it takes Claudia's most efficient work to keep Jane from messing up a promising career.

It is hardly necessary to point out that all this is far from earth-shaking. Miss Jacob attempts nothing beyond the telling of an engaging yarn about some moderately credible and attractive people, and this she accomplishes with the usual technical competence of the British novelist. Certain passages indicate that the author, if she chose, might animate these clever creations of hers, and lend real significance to the plot. But in any case here is a well made story, neither too saccharine nor over-inclined to emotional outpourings, full of sure-fire tricks, but presenting them always in a new guise, acceptably written and with much genuine humor. Some Thomas Marshall of literature has said that what we need is a good light romantic novelist: in Naomi Jacob it is quite possible that we have found her.

See page 22 for biographical note on Naomi Jacob.

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China's United Front

RED STAR OVER CHINA. By Edgar Snow. New York: Random House. 1938. $3.

FIRST ACT IN CHINA: The Story of the Sian Mutiny. By James M. Bertram. New York: The Viking Press. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

WHEN Japan's North China garrison ran amuck last July, many an Old China Hand predicted that the Chinese National Government, convinced of its utter inability to cope with the Japanese arms, would go through the motions of patriotic resistance to the death, and then reach an ignominious compromise of the sort familiar since 1931. China might, it was held, preserve "face" by non-recognition or by granting "autonomous" status to new areas subjected to Japanese penetration. But she would not fight the issue to a clean-cut solution—not yet. Six months later it is evident that those, Japanese included, who prophesied a pusillanimous surrender were completely mistaken. Although defeated on all fronts, China struggles on with admirable determination.

What accounts for this un-Chinese intransigence? Only, it appears, the certainty that a government which did not resist to the uttermost would forthwith be swept from power. For China exhibits to an ever-increasing degree the attributes of a modern nationalist state. An appreciation of how and why this development is taking place is undoubtedly the most important contribution made by both Mr. Snow and Mr. Bertram to American readers. While Mr. Snow is concerned only with the vicissitudes of rebel governments which have never had more than 9,000,000 souls under their control, the leaders of these transient regimes have provided the intellectual leaven which is steadily impelling China along the halting revolutionary course begun in 1911. Mr. Bertram deals primarily with the genesis and denouement of a mutiny of 170,000 men, but their emotional drives seem faithfully to reflect the new forces in the Chinese anti-imperialist struggle. Thus, taken in conjunction, the two volumes afford a fair index to the perplexities of the current situation.

"Red Star Over China" deserves the accolade which will be bestowed upon it by students of social experiments, Far Eastern experts, and devotees of journalistic reminiscences. It would be a significant book if it were simply the saga of the Chinese Communists' dramatic struggle to maintain their beleaguered government against five smashing Kuomintang offensives. It would be a first-rate tale of heroic adventure if it did no more than chronicle that master military achievement of modern times—the incredible six-thousand-mile march across all China to the far Northwest. It would be an illuminating social document if it were only a biographical account of the Chinese Soviet leaders, a record of the evolution of Soviet policy, and a description of the Reds' achievements. In all these fields it blazes new trails for the historian.

For Mr. Snow has accomplished a magnificent feat. He was the first individual, Chinese or foreign, to run the blockade formed by cordons of National Government troops around the Reds and return with a mass of newsworthy material. Readers not conversant with the subject will be amazed at the social structure which, he finds, has been built up against such heavy odds. Realizing that pure communism could not be implanted overnight in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country like China, the Reds have made rural equalitarianism their first goal. Large landholdings have been confiscated and distributed to the poor; coöperatives and rudimentary state industries compete with private enterprise; and education, crudely but effectively propagandist, is everywhere stimulated.

TUNGPEI TROOPS IN PROCESSION
From "First Act in China."

No one can read the story of Soviet progress without reaching the conclusion that, with all their errors and failings, the Reds have introduced a new element into Chinese life. A sense of personal dignity and participation in a great common effort has struck root among the populace in the Red areas. This is not simply because the peasant is for the first time receiving a respite from the exactions of tax gatherers, usurers, and grasping war lords, although that in itself constitutes a revolution in practice. One must look to the unostentatious honesty, the patent sincerity of Communist leaders and soldiers, to find a fitting explanation. It remains to be seen, of course, whether the atmosphere of moral uplift is actually quite so unalloyed as Mr. Snow believes, or whether it will survive when the exhilarating environment of war has given way to the routine of peace. For the present, however, the Communists' crusading zeal is an undoubted reality.

But the establishment of a new agrarian government has not been the sole concern of the Communist regime. Its leaders have understood that China's greatest enemy is the foreign imperialist: in the first instance, the Japanese. Until he is driven from the country, it will be impossible to pass through the necessary intermediate stage of native bourgeois capitalism in order to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence the overriding need, in Communist eyes, for a United Front program to combat Tokyo's fascist invasion.

Cynics will, of course, brand this tactic an opportunistic renunciation of basic Communist principles without ideological

FIGHTING RED FARMERS—*From "Red Star Over China."*

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justification. Be that as it may, both Mr. Snow and Mr. Bertram have well described the sincerity which has motivated the Communist leaders in abandoning the social revolution, coming to terms with Chiang Kai-shek, and concentrating all their forces against the Japanese. At Sian in December 1936 Communist influence would have been sufficient to tip the balance toward the execution of the kidnaped Generalissimo. Here if ever was Red China's opportunity to eradicate its arch-enemy. Yet, with a far-sighted desire to foster national unity, the Red leaders exercised what was perhaps the decisive voice in favor of moderation. As the Communists foresaw, the outcome was a new advance toward national solidarity. The entire development is brilliantly analyzed by Mr. Snow, who makes it the basis for a highly provocative Marxist dictum on China's future.

"First Act in China," a description of an isolated though crucially important episode in Chinese history, is inevitably overshadowed by Mr. Snow's work. It is, none the less, a colorful story of the Chinese Northwest, containing valuable political material on the position of the various Chinese factions, in Nanking as well as Sian, since 1931. Mr. Bertram does not unreservedly support the United Front policy. Events, however, appear to have proved the wisdom of the Communist policy. The die is now cast; whatever the outcome of the hostilities in China, it will not be possible to say that the Chinese did not go down fighting nobly in a patriotic cause. Historians of the future will place both these books high on their list of contemporary background material. And the spirits of Left wingers disheartened by the course of their Russian cynosure may perhaps be revived by the rousing epic of Red China.

David H. Popper is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association. See page 22 for notes on Edgar Snow and James M. Bertram.

The Personality of China

CHINESE WOMEN: Yesterday and Today. By Florence Ayscough. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE E. SOKOLSKY

NOW that China is on the map again, everyone who has ever been to that unfortunate country will feel called upon to write a book. And publishers will rush into books with ever less discrimination.

Out of that welter of books may come a few that are really worth reading and still fewer that are worth writing. And among the current crop, one of the very best—and so far the most valuable—is this by Florence Ayscough.

When I first arrived in China, back in 1918, Florence Ayscough was a notable, even a famous Sinologue. Most foreigners who write about China are journalistic in the sense that they can report what is obvious on the surface. Florence Ayscough, however, knew her Chinese—the language, the culture, the people. Her translations from Chinese into English are not only the product of constant and profound study, but they possess a rare and delightful literary merit.

And so, we less blessed folks used to look up to her and envy her ability and knowledge. Her present work is badly titled, for it fails altogether to give a key to its greatest value, namely, the remarkable translations of folk-songs and ballads which Mrs. Ayscough introduces into almost every chapter to prove a point.

The story of China, like the story of all old peoples, is written permanently in her folk-songs. They alone provide the "atmosphere" of every period. They tell of the feelings of the people, their worries, their aspirations, their beliefs. But more than that, they are a key to ideas and habits and changes. Those who speak only of current events in China see the perished flowers, but they know nothing of the sturdy roots. It is in such a work as Mrs. Ayscough has given us that the roots are uncovered and their strength becomes evident. Such roots will again produce blossoms.

Apart from the folk-songs, Mrs. Ayscough's book is valuable because she has caught an essential fact about China which is usually missed by casual writers, namely, that the essence of the vast changes through which China is passing is a social revolution that goes deep into the habits of the people and that is affecting personality. This revolution was introduced by Christianity. She says:

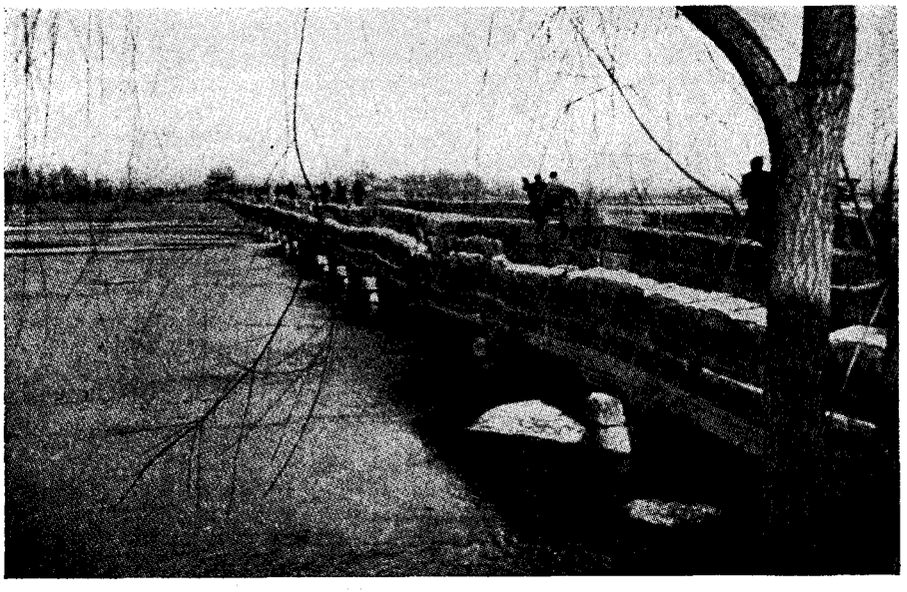
> The role played by Protestant missionaries in the intellectual "opening" of China cannot be overestimated. In talking once with a British diplomat I remarked, "Do you not agree with me in thinking that Protestant missionaries have materially hastened the Revolution?" "I would go much further," he replied. "In my opinion *American* missionaries have been the one most potent factor in bringing about the Revolution." By the word "Revolution" a complete change in social structure must be understood. Protestant missionaries, frequently married men and women, taught and exemplified Western ideals of home life. They believed that men and women should be friends, and that boys and girls should play together. Amazing! Horrifying!
>
> Early recruits for mission schools were drawn principally from the poorer classes, the little girls, especially, being for the most part unwanted entities in families where mouths were disproportionate in ratio to rice-bowls.

Unless the effects of this are understood, it is impossible to appreciate such a personality as Chiang Kai-shek or such women as the Soong sisters.

Mrs. Ayscough's data on marriage and divorce, on concubines and prostitutes, on household habits and the education of women are invaluable because they will be found nowhere else in such detailed accuracy. Her biographical sketches of significant Chinese women place upon the feministic stage new characters heretofore unknown to the Western world.

Only once did I disagree with Mrs. Ayscough. She hates machines and factories. I, on the contrary, believe that next to Christianity, the factory is the most valuable contribution that the West has made to China. But that, of course, is a matter of opinion and the controversy over it has no place in this book, which I hope will be read, as it deserves to be, not only by those who are interested in China, but by everyone who loves folk-poetry.

George E. Sokolsky is the author of a number of books on the Far East, including "The Tinder Box of Asia."



PA CH'IAO—THE MOST FAMOUS BRIDGE IN CHINA.
From "First Act in China."

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The Saturday Review
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Ace in the Hole

MR. CLIFTON FADIMAN, who practises in *The New Yorker* the same trade we practise here, has for the second time ended a year's reviewing by publicly acknowledging his mistakes. It is a striking act and it attests Mr. Fadiman's humility but we are not going to act on his precedent. In the first place, we think that his behavior is subversive, for he knows as well as anyone the absolute condition of literary criticism: that it never makes mistakes, that in fact it cannot make mistakes. In the second place, our particular kind of humility trumps his. We know it doesn't matter to anyone what mistakes we made in our reviews of last year. That is, the reading public does not remember or care what mistakes we made, though of course the authors of the books we made the wrong kind of mistake about remember. But no confession is going to erase that memory.

Besides, from an author's point of view there is no such thing as a satisfactory review of a book. There may be an understanding and well-intended review but it should have gone farther, worked through its reservations, resolved its doubts, been franker and fuller in its intelligent praise. What the best reviewers lack is confidence in their own judgment: even when they see a book is good they are too timid to go all out. They may announce the truth with some candor but they speak in tones too conversational, avoiding megaphones and amplifiers, whereas when you've got hold of some truth you ought to hammer it home.

An editor, of course, hasn't even that much chance to be right. We have seen letters from authors thanking reviewers for what was a pretty good job, considering how many additional defects it might have had. We have never seen a letter thanking an editor for the job done on the author's book in his magazine. Not only is an editor a natural enemy of authors, he is a conspirator as well. When he reviews a book himself, he is more than just a reviewer, and much worse. He should not have reviewed it. He is unsympathetic toward the author or the kind of book; he ought to have acknowledged his prejudice and refrained. He is even known to meet with his fellow conspirators on Wednesday nights and, after an hour of close-order drill, plan with them just how this book, or anyway this kind of book, can be most effectively attacked. If he is a friend of the author's he becomes an enemy, for a self-righteous pose keeps him from praising it as freely as a stranger would have done. If he is not a friend, he is even more obviously an enemy, and has been bragging in public places for months how he was going to butcher the book when it appeared. If he has never met or heard of the author, why didn't he assign the book to someone who has? Why didn't he pick out someone known to be favorable to the author, or at least sympathetic with his point of view? Why didn't he pick out someone who knew something about its field? Why did he review it? Why did he want to review it? Ans.: Besides conspiring against the book, he wanted to advance other causes of his own, and of course he saw a good chance to show off.

If he assigned the book to someone else, why didn't he review it himself? A review by the editor of a magazine carries weight; by merely not reviewing it himself, the editor has slurred the book in advance. It is also a slur if his search for a particular reviewer (which in itself shows hostility) results in delaying the review till the week after publication—for that shows that he doesn't consider the book important and probably wants to spoil its sale. But if he rushes a review into print in the week of publication that also proves malice and hostility, for he should have used more care in selecting a reviewer. If the review is favorable, the editor took care to get a reviewer who wouldn't be favorable enough; if it is unfavorable, he merely got someone who was willing to do a more venal and dishonest job than he would care to sign himself. If he had a layman write the review he should have got an expert, for the layman's ignorance is itself a kind of prejudice. If he got an expert, that proves conspiracy, for the public isn't interested in an expert's picayune faultfinding, and this particular expert is notorious for his professional jealousy. But where the editor's hositility shows most unmistakably is in the amount of space assigned. Once an editor gave a reviewer all the space he wanted—that was in the *Edinburgh Review*—but no editor has ever given a book as much space as it ought to have had. Or ever will.

These are a few of the considerations that restrain us from confessing our 1937 mistakes. They were all predestined, and if we can judge by our mail we don't need to acknowledge them. But if we won't follow Mr. Fadiman's example, we admit he's got something there. We support the principle and are willing to carry it even farther. We are willing to confess here and now the mistakes we are going to make in 1938.

They are going to spring from the vocational infirmity of critics: taking writers too seriously and failing to take literature seriously enough. We intend to be as careful as possible but about the time Dick Roe's new novel comes out we may be off our guard. Dick knows so little economics that he always has to borrow money to pay his income tax, so little finance that a bank terrifies him and he borrows from a friend, and so little business management that he pays twice as much tax as he legally owes. He is intelligent enough to understand a baseball schedule but not intelligent enough to diagnose the knock in his automobile engine. He is such a bust at human relations that two women have divorced him and a dozen others fled from him, one of his children left home and the other hates him, he can't keep a friend more than a year, and it takes six ounces of alcohol to make him acceptable to strangers. He has a pleasant talent for mimicry and knows how to tell a story effectively but his first two books were so favorably received that he never bothered to learn his trade really well. So now he publishes a novel showing how corrupt finance and the ineffective system of big business brutalize all the profound and secret beauties of love, friendship, marriage, and parenthood. You would find it absorbing on a train ride and would enjoy it at any other time when you didn't require credible behavior or intelligent interpretation of it. But it has no more similarity to what happens to people in the actual world than a *New Masses* report on the recent election in Russia.

We ought to tell you just that about Dick's book, for we know about Dick and his mind. But that may be our off week, and if it is we may tear our hair in passionate paragraphs, revile him for failing to lift the laurel wreath from the brow of Proust, dismember his unpretentious little job page by page, and moan and scream because he has hideously misrepresented the good and the true, not to mention the beautiful. That will be taking Proust much less seriously and Dick Roe much more seriously than we ought. Keep your eye on us; we will guarantee not to make the mistake during January, but a critic is flesh, and from February on, watch out. You wouldn't believe us anyway if we said that any book before June, at least, was a masterpiece; so we can discount that. And this is fair notification that when we raise Cain with a book because it isn't one, nobody but a critic would suppose it had to be or was meant to be one, and nobody but a critic would excite himself because it isn't. . . . We've got an ace down and a ten showing. How about it, Mr. Fadiman?

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Letters to the Editor: *The Faculty Style; Dr. Cronin's Novels*

Philippic

SIR:—For your philippic on faculty style, thanks. If you have some extra copies, send them for charity's sake to all the presidents and chairmen you can think of—though I need hardly add that results will probably be negative. We college people are if anything more complacent than columnists and editors.

It is only fair to say that we have found *The Saturday Review* helpful and instructive. We liked the affaire Jones-Colum, and concluded that the protagonists were both wrong. We felt that the reviews of "Imperial City" and "A World History of Art" were inadequate and misleading, and for that reason not representative of your reviewing as a whole. . . .

GERALD WARNER BRACE.

Mount Holyoke College
South Hadley, Mass.

SIR:—I wish to indorse heartily your editorial, "The Faculty Style." It was much needed. Doubtless you will receive protests from the Old Guard, which never surrenders to new ideas; but I trust you will receive at least a respectable minority of cheers from professors of English in our best colleges and universities.

HARRY T. BAKER.

Goucher College
Baltimore, Md.

"Citadel" and "Stars Look Down"

SIR: — The following remarks are prompted by your discussion of Cronin's "Citadel" in the Reviewing Reviews column of a recent issue.

I cannot agree with Fadiman that the contrived nature of the plot keeps "The Citadel" from being a great novel. Cronin is a master of plot, a good story teller; he makes the career of the ambitious doctor convincing and not improbable. It is rather that the author has allowed his exposé of the medical profession to displace his usual human sympathy.

One looks in vain in "The Citadel" for that insight into the complexities of the capital-labor conflict which made "The Stars Look Down" such a profound and moving book; and one wonders why Hansen should consider "The Citadel" the greater novel. Cronin here protests too much. The instinctive fairness of human nature tempts the reader to play the devil's advocate and to exclaim that the medical profession surely can't be so bad as that.

The heroes of both books are enthusiastic, uncompromising idealists; but with this difference. David of the earlier book is sincerely moved by a sense of wrong; Andrew too often by mere indignation, untouched by sympathy. David is visionary; Andrew, one fears, merely ingenuous. Hence the failure of David is bitterly ironic, with a touch of tragic grandeur, while the career of Andrew seems in comparison blundering and misguided.

Cronin's work is sincere and imposing. It gives one renewed confidence in the tried methods of traditional fiction. Ripeness is all; Mr. Cronin has the requisite ripeness, but to one acquainted with his former work, "The Citadel" is deficient in this very quality.

RICHARD M. KAIN.

Delaware, Ohio

"THAT WAS A FINE REPORT YOU WROTE OF THE ROBBERY LAST NIGHT, MULLIGAN. I LIKED THE SURPRISE FINISH."

Publishers and the Public

SIR:—A bookseller who worked as a publisher's representative at the *New York Times* National Book Fair had an unusual opportunity;—the chance to combine both points of view and come to conclusions that may be of some value to the book trade in general.

After observing thousands of people examine the books of our exhibit and those exhibitors near me, I came to the conclusion that fiction attracted the least attention of all types of book displayed. The people in general seemed interested in non-fiction of every type—biography, memoirs, travel books on timely subjects, international affairs, nature subjects, sports, hobbies, and self-help of all kinds. And children's books were constantly handled and inquired about.

In selling and in renting books, fiction seems to be so much in demand, one often thinks the general public is mostly interested in that type of book. The publisher, too, puts his best efforts, generally speaking, on fiction titles. To one big non-fiction title in every publishing season, there are several fiction titles that receive large advertising and sales promotion.

The benefits of this great Book Fair to the publisher seem to me to have many angles; most of them, as in radio advertising, difficult to trace as bringing tangible results. The public's reaction to titles and jackets is of much greater importance in selling books than is realized. Many a fine book is doomed to obscurity for a small reason like a "dust jacket." I think the Book Fair gives the publishers the opportunity to study "customers' reactions" and by just such small points gain greater sales volume. Every publisher would like his imprint to mean something very active to the book buying public. And the Fair helps that imprint to mean something. Each visitor has the publisher's name brought to his attention; he sees the variety and merit of that particular line, and nine chances out of ten he will be more impressed when he reads that name on the next title page he has in hand. A number of people would say to me—"I didn't know Lippincotts published sport books," or so and so. As a bookseller I know how true this is—comparatively few people know a publisher has a variety of types of books on his list.

One of the main reasons people so enjoy such a display by the publishers as found in the Book Fair is that they feel they are under no real or imagined obligation to buy after "browsing"! Unfortunately, in these modern times when nothing is sacred to shoplifters—not even books—booksellers have to slightly discourage too much browsing. The real booklover is welcome to browse and browse, but because there must be constant watch for book thieves this innocent browser is sometimes made to feel uncomfortable by buzzing salesmen.

And the books were handled at the Fair—in fact often became quite tattered from the thousands of hands examining them. It is a good sign—it reassures us all that in spite of so much entertainment in the movies, radio, etc., people still want and love books.

JEAN SARGENT PACA.

New York City.

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Nature and Destiny

FOUR WAYS OF PHILOSOPHY. By Irwin Edman. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by HAROLD A. LARRABEE

PROFESSOR IRWIN EDMAN of Columbia is a shining exception to two fairly reliable rules. One is that professional philosophers write badly. He writes with genuine fire and eloquence. The other is that most philosophers do full justice only to their own philosophies. He frequently outdoes the supporters of points of view with which he disagrees, in the warmth with which he expounds their doctrines. These two qualifications alone come close to making him the ideal writer on philosophical subjects for the layman. Add to these the fact that he has been the associate of three of the most deeply influential thinkers of our time, Dewey, Santayana, and Woodbridge, and a book expanded from his Beecher Lectures at Amherst arouses the highest expectations.

The reader who is ready and willing to meet the author even a little less than halfway, intellectually speaking, will not be disappointed. Dr. Edman does not write down; he undertakes the far more difficult task of drawing his audience up. That he succeeds in the attempt, by way of the printed page as well as by word of mouth in the classroom, is perhaps the best proof of his lucidity and persuasiveness. Here at last are golden words from a thoroughly contemporary oracle on the ultimate themes of human life and destiny.

When a philosopher-poet speaks fully and freely from both mind and heart, labels are likely to be out of place. Professor Edman's own way of philosophy, however, might be described as a naturalism which affirms rather than denies the validity of human values. To set man over against nature, of which he is one of the "forms and habits," is a contradiction in terms. But to suppose that this compels the elimination of values by reducing them to the mechanical structures underlying them is equally nonsensical. "Truth, Goodness and Beauty . . . are fruits of this world, roses among its thorns, goods among its evils . . ." Giving full weight to evils as well as goods, goods as well as evils, the task of the naturalistic philosopher is to discover "what honest and informed peace man can make" with the nature of which he is a self-conscious expression.

It will hardly suit those who insist upon metaphysical supports for their preferences. In the two chapters on philosophy as "logical faith" and as "mystical insight," the views of these modern animists, who cannot bring themselves to the point of abandoning the age-long effort to read human likings and disliking into the entire universe, are set forth in all their plausible attractiveness to the romantic imagination. On the timely subject of philosophy as "social criticism," both direct and indirect, the author makes many penetrating suggestions without forgetting that "for the philosopher, government is a need, not a fruition."

Rarely have those varieties of contemporary philosophy which are perennial because they correspond to recurrent temperamental differences in human beings been presented to the general reader with greater literary skill. The author is not worried about perspectives which differ from his own, because to him philosophy is "a wide and disciplined poetry, celebrating man's origin, his vicissitudes, and his objects of love." It has been mistaken in regarding itself as "either a transcript of reality or a specific program for life. . . It is a lyric but a lyric whose theme happens to be nature and destiny . . . a commentary by a private spirit on the public domain of nature." To some, this conception of the task of the philosopher will seem a lowering and a renunciation. To others, it will appear so exalted and arduous that it disqualifies all but the hardiest imaginers. Both groups will find to their astonishment that Professor Edman manages to practise exactly what he preaches.

Harold A. Larrabee is professor of philosophy at Union College.

In the Balkan Mountains

KING ZOG'S ALBANIA. By J. Swire, New York: Liveright, Inc. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by ROSE WILDER LANE

HERE we have an admirable book by a talented British journalist. I think that Americans have here their only opportunity to learn easily and with fascinated pleasure the history of a country whose mountains were the home of Pan and Apollo, whose morning star is Aphrodite (afro, near; dite, the day), whose green valleys gave rest to warriors returning from Troy, whose acropolis was seven times larger than that of Athens, and whose peasants today think of Alexander the Great as we, let us say, think of John Quincy Adams. Mr. Swire conveys those Alpine scenes, the color, the enchantment. He gives a sense of the reality of travel.

For twenty-five hundred years, and for half a thousand miles, Mr. Swire earns unqualified enthusiasm. Then, politically, and since 1913, his voice becomes that of the British Foreign Office. This is not the modern Albania known to King Zog. (Long *o*, please.) Albanians do not regard these facts as Mr. Swire regards them, and they consider many facts he does not mention. Our State Department has another version of Europe's pre-war attempt to force upon Albanians a German king, and very different official reports indeed of the Pact of Tirana, of the Banca d'Italia's activities in Albania, of the reason why Ahmet Zogu ceased his effort to create a republic, and of his government's domestic troubles and foreign policy. Mr. Swire's passing comments on the position of women are the usual error of alien ignorance. So is his use of the word "fanatic" in religious questions.

With these reservations, which a short review magnifies beyond all proportion, this is a valuable book. It is by far the best work on Albania obtainable in America. By all means read it; borrow it or buy it, but do not lend it. Who gets his hands on this book will keep it.

FORDING A STREAM IN ALBANIA

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"WALKING ALL THE WAY FROM FLORIDA LOOKING FOR A JOB"
Photograph by Margaret Bourke-White, from "You Have Seen Their Faces."

Southern Share-croppers

Autobiography

I WAS A SHARE-CROPPER. By Harry Harrison Kroll. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN D. ALLEN

THE autobiography of any Southern share-cropper, if he had the imagination and the words to relate it, would at least be worth the hearing. But circumstances have deprived him of both. Mr. Kroll was never himself a share-cropper. From late childhood, beginning with his apprenticeship as a butcher's boy in "Cottontown," West Tennessee, his career led steadily away from the cabin. His father, however, did bear the brand, as one of many independent farmers who during the early nineties had been forced down the economic ladder; and the author's most compelling memories, those his readers will longest recall, relate to actual share-cropper existence.

These memories, however, could hardly be called typical of the cropper class. Beyond the possible reshaping given them by the subsequent career of the author is the fact that they are associated with a region, the Mississippi river-land fringe, which in his childhood had hardly been developed and which was therefore much more socially fluid than it is now. Nor, though share-cropping, were his parents average cropper folk. They still clung to a social heritage alien to the hopeless; and on a sensitive child they exercised an influence decisive for his own development.

Mr. Kroll unfolds his frank narrative in terms of persons, incidents, scenes; and the reader will find little discussion of the forces that with peculiar strength in the South have operated to create a class of peripatetic serfs. But he will find many pictures that have the fascination of truth. Along with the practising poet's eye for color and form, Mr. Kroll has a fine sensitiveness to human personalities and an unusual power of recreating the dramas, sordid or bright, in the lives of humble folk. They make all of his story interesting, give charm to the account of his rise from itinerant photographer to teacher, college student, scholar, author. They make especially interesting those passages in which, without the fabulous touches of a Caldwell or the frenzy of a Faulkner, are related the cabin-in-the-cotton memories of a share-cropper's son.

Report

YOU HAVE SEEN THEIR FACES. By Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White. New York: The Viking Press. 1937. $5. *Modern Age Books.* 1937. *Paper, 75 cents.*

ERSKINE CALDWELL left his novelist's imagination behind when he started on his latest trip South, and consequently his report of conditions among the tenant farmers is first rate. He explains the forces that have produced share-cropping, and by means of thumbnail case histories he shows what the share-cropper's life is. The text is entirely in key with Margaret Bourke-White's excellent photographs: clear, convincing without overdramatization, allowing the subjects to speak for themselves. True, he more or less conveys the idea that all landlords live on yachts; nevertheless the report is written not to arouse hatred, but to make us understand. Mr. Caldwell closes by suggesting the need for a government commission, composed of experts together with representatives of all the interests involved, "to make a study of tenant farming in the cotton country. . . . No surmise could be undertaken until the facts of the study itself were known." Because he is writing of human beings, not Jeeter Lesters, this is Mr. Caldwell's most interesting and important book.

Mr. Frankau Carries On

THE DANGEROUS YEARS. By Gilbert Frankau. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $2.50.

PATTERNED in three lengthy sections, Mr. Frankau's new novel affords us as many copious slices from the life of a huntin'-shootin'-fishin' Englishwoman. Lady Carteret is something more than a good woman to hounds, however. Though the author never puts it into so many words he evidently means her to stand for the representative British mother of the upper class. Daughter of a schoolmaster, she made a good unromantic marriage with a baronet. Before Sir John died saving her life as the *Titanic* sank, she had borne him four children,—or at least so the world thought. A widow at thirty-five and still a "stunner" according to her eldest son, she was prevented only by the war from taking dashing Rupert Whittinghame as second husband. He was her childhood sweetheart, and "a bit of a bounder," again on filial authority. But Rupert could not wait to get married before rushing into the scrap, and soon got himself killed. Afterwards, Lady Carteret's opulent, comfortable England seemed changed, somehow, and her youngest as he grew up revealed a disturbing physical and moral likeness to Rupert. . . .

And so in the later portions of the story we follow young Maurice in his father's footsteps, see him getting involved with a girl while at Harrow, casting an unbrotherly glance at his brother's wife, and finally marrying a beautiful Argentine, who turns out to be a dope fiend. In spite of this he sticks to her until he meets a gory death in the pulverized ruins of Toledo's Alcazar. Lady Carteret, at home, takes all this nobly, drying her eyes, squaring her shoulders, and carrying on. After all, the other three children had done quite well for themselves, what with John in the Cabinet, and Philip and Elizabeth married to economic royalty in Philadelphia.

This outline should of itself indicate pretty much the sort of book Mr. Frankau has written. It is an excellent piece of work in an honorable if nowadays slightly outmoded tradition of British fiction, displays sound craftsmanship throughout, and as sheer narrative more than delivers the goods. The *Titanic* episode, some of the hunting scenes, and the account of the siege together furnish sufficient dramatic backbone to stiffen the rest of a rather long drawn out plot, which is nevertheless acceptably handled even when it is most conventional. Mr. Frankau never tries to get far under the well-groomed British skins of his characters, but that after all is perhaps asking too much in a novel of this type. No doubt a large public will agree that in the case of gentlefolk like the Carterets subcutaneous exploration wouldn't be quite the thing.

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A Literary Discovery

ROBERT BROWNING AND JULIA WEDGWOOD, THEIR LETTERS. Edited by Richard Curle. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

NO literary discovery for many years has excited more legitimate interest than the Browning-Wedgwood letters. Quite apart from the fact that the correspondence illustrates a somewhat dim period in the life of a great man and a great poet, it is interesting intrinsically in its own right. These papers are anything but the casual interchange of opinion between a man of letters and a blue-stocking. They are full of fire, they tell a story, and they exhibit her feminine anfractuosity and his unlimited forbearance.

Julia Wedgwood belonged to the best connections in England. She was the great-granddaughter of Josiah Wedgwood of Etruria. She was the granddaughter of Sir James Mackintosh, the brave radical who debated the merits of the French Revolution with Edmund Burke on equal terms. Her father's sister was the wife of Charles Darwin. She had reached the age of thirty in easy material circumstances.

At the time when the correspondence begins, she had been for a long period attracted to the poetry of Robert Browning, in which she professed to discover none of the difficulties that bewildered or diverted the reviewers of those barbarous times. As for Browning, he was fifty-one, two years a widower, and approaching perihelion, when they first met. All the ingredients appear to have been present.

Spiritual concerns, questions of intellectual attitude, delicate discriminations as to how things appear to a woman, and similar trifles are discussed and meticulously analyzed. She feels that she has made the first advance, and this must be taken apart, put together again, and justified. Meanwhile Browning is in and out of No. 1 Cumberland Place with characteristic but astonishing rapidity, and in his letters the points she raises or the scruples she alleges are considered or rebutted with unfailing consideration. Then with a maddening slowness that can be likened to the slowness of development in a novel by Henry James, a change comes over the spirit of the relation. For one reason or another, she will not be able to see him on Monday, nor yet on Thursday, nor on Tuesday week, until on March 1, 1865 Julia Wedgwood writes Robert Browning in so many words that "it would be better that we did not meet again just now, at least that you did not come here." Two more letters, one from him wounded but comprehending, and the correspondence ends for two years. There is a shadow of explanation: people had evidently been talking.

Ostensibly it was he who opened it again. Anyhow, on a slender pretext, out of the unclouded sky of 1867 Robert Browning asks Miss Wedgwood if she would like to run her critical eye over—"The Ring and the Book," a work which was on the stocks in the earlier and better days. Obviously enchanted to do so, she runs it. And one does not know whether to laugh or cry. Her admiration for the man stands confronted by her horror of the poet's reading of the world. She wants it all Pompilia and no Franceschini. And it is in vain that he points out that you can't have one without the other. Nor is it surprising to see the resumed correspondence dying out in generalities, with pious hopes on her part that he might confine himself to "translating" the spirit of Mrs. Browning into terms understood by the people. No one can think it odd that what

JULIA WEDGWOOD

proved to be his last letter has a dragging undertow of irritation, or that the episode should terminate with her unrepentant reply.

There is no need to make an estimate of Robert Browning, who emerges from the ordeal as one might expect. But it is hard to make an estimate of Julia Wedgwood. Mr. Curle, who is a most sympathetic and intelligent editor, feels that she was prose-minded and too apt to moralize, which is perfectly true. But however wrong-headed and cranky, she was penetrating and honest with herself and Browning. The woman who liked Lord Houghton, because she liked people who had something "manqué" about them, is no mere nineteenth century moralizer. No doubt she felt her fancies were engraved on the tables of Sinai, but there was no subterfuge about her, she was downright, and she endeavored to be clear, in which last her success was sometimes not complete. You want to wring her neck, but you can't help respecting her, prejudices, inhibitions, hair-splitting over-refinement and all. As you close the book you are convinced that she was not entirely unqualified to mean something to Robert Browning.

What to Do?

THIS TROUBLED WORLD. By Eleanor Roosevelt. New York: H. C. Kinsey & Co. 1938. $1.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

MRS. ROOSEVELT'S comments on the most inclusive and most depressing of current topics derive an accidental interest from her position, but what she has to say about it might be said by any well informed and well intentioned citizen. Substantially it is that the situation is pretty bad, something ought to be done about it, but God knows what. She has a solution, to be sure, and probably the only solution that would work—a fundamental change in human nature, "brotherly love not as a doctrine but as a way of living." But she admits that reëducation of the race will not be easy; though she insists that it can be done—perhaps in time.

People who should get most out of this book are pacifists with panaceas; apparently they are always bringing Mrs. Roosevelt their cure-alls, and she sets down briefly the reasons why they would not work. She has a scheme of her own, to be sure, but she puts it forward without much confidence. Submission of all international disputes to "some body which will publish the facts to the world at large and give public opinion a chance to make a decision"; a verdict rendered by "a group of world representatives"; and the naming as aggressor of any nation which turns to force instead of accepting that verdict. An aggressor might be coerced by an economic boycott and if that did not work, in a case where there was general agreement on the rights and wrongs, an international police force could step in not to crush the aggressor but to check him by defense.

Obviously such a plan raises many questions; especially as she rules out the League of Nations as the fact-finding agency, and admits that complete coöperation in an economic boycott would be hard to get just now. So she presently confesses a doubt that peace will come through any plans, "even my own," and goes back to the slower method of changing human nature. We can make a start at home, trying a little brotherly love among ourselves. For instance, citizens whom she identifies only as "different personalities in a group having the same basic interests" in economic conflicts (call them William Green and John L. Lewis for short) would get farther if they could "forget themselves as individuals and think only of the objectives in view." If thus, by good will and forbearance, we could clear up our domestic difficulties, we might find people in other countries who want peace, and would be willing to join us in working for it.

It is an attractive doctrine, and perhaps the only sound one. But it might be a little hard to sell to Colonel Hashimoto.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Reasons of My Own

WE started—quite a while ago—to go along one of the shelves to see what we would find. Something interrupted, I forget what. It occurs to me now to begin again, at the other end. This is the easiest shelf to stroll, without reaching or stooping: it is about the level of the average eye. (I suppose, by the way, that wise booksellers have figured out the strategic heights at which to shelve the various kinds of books? but I have never seen the matter systematically computed.)

The western end of the shelf begins with a row of books mostly nautical—rather haphazard, for the maritime cargo is stowed vertical, not horizontal. The first thing worth remark is a pale blue pamphlet stained with mud and wet. It is the *Pilot Rules for Certain Inland Waters,* Government Printing Office, 1922. It still bears rich smears of dried ooze from the bottom of Manhasset Bay: it was in the skipper's locker of a rather rickety launch, the *Mr. Gissing,* when she filled and foundered at her mooring. I doubt whether even the great captains (Lecky, Bone, Riesenberg) who are berthed nearby on the shelf could have kept *Mr. Gissing* afloat in that blow. She was a pretty hull, gracefully sheered, but crank in the beam and with a big awning-top to catch the gust. But she was an education in pessimism: Burton could have added a new chapter to his capacious Anatomy if he had ever tinkered with the one-cylinder motor of an elderly launch (full of family) which had quit running, about sunset time, plumb in the track of the Sound steamers. Besides this muddy pamphlet I have one other relic of this vanished craft: her smart little ship's bell, now used to summon the hermit from his Knothole for lunch.

Lecky's *Wrinkles in Practical Navigation* and Riesenberg's *Standard Seamanship* are a solid and seaworthy pair to rise like big ships over several books on small boating. Our well-loved Oliver Perry used to maintain that Lecky's *Wrinkles* was the best bedtime book in the world; he always kept it in his bunk-shelf in his various vessels. Take just one page of Lecky's alluring index and see a few entries:—

Rolled charts an abomination
Rustic weather prophets
Sea horizon not reliable
Seaman's secrets
Sextant, Raper on tormenting
Sinbad revived
Sirens, fickle
Sky pilotage
Sluggish compasses
Snares and delusions

Old Lecky's method of instructing us on points of navigation is as cheerful as a short story. E.g., "to simplify matters," he says, "the reader will be good enough to suppose himself in a vessel at anchor, in the month of December, some few miles south-eastward of Monte Video, and that his chronometers are exactly correct, and his position known to a nicety by cross bearings of Flores Island and the Cerro." Fine, you say to yourself; certainly no story of Conrad's ever began more agreeably. That's literature. But then the trouble starts. "Next, let us suppose that, owing to abnormal refraction, the horizon is depressed, say three minutes of arc, and remains in that condition all day." Now go ahead and see what grief this may make for you: in the course of which demonstration Captain Lecky suddenly transfers the viable reader to the Red Sea, where excessive refraction is serious for navigators. But always Lecky illustrates his doctrines with humble and vigorous familiarity. He tells how an argumentative Chief Officer was convinced of the illusions of horizontal refraction by an experience at his wash basin:—

"Being firmly seated in front of an empty wash-hand basin, so that the brass plug at the bottom was quite invisible, the basin was about half filled with water from a can, when, without moving his head, he at once, to his great astonishment, saw the plug. On letting the water run off, the plug again disappeared."

"IN AMSTERDAM THERE DWELT A MAID. . . ."
Woodcut by Freda Bone, from "Capstan Bars," by David Bone.

Alongside *Wrinkles* and *Standard Seamanship* stand two other books by Riesenberg, *Vignettes of the Sea* and *Log of the Sea,* both dear to me for many reasons. In the first I myself played the lowly role of "cook at the foresheet," viz. I contributed a preface; the other always reminds me, in its moving tribute to Findlay's *Directory of the North Atlantic,* that the latter is a book I some day intend to study. "A basic document, only secondary to the sea itself," says Riesenberg, and adds "it sails close to *Moby Dick.*" Findlay's book has been a seaman's classic for 125 years; I remember that I first heard of him somewhere in R. L. Stevenson's letters. And another pleasure in those two rich and wise and moving books of F. R's is that they both contain the egregious episode of The Strong Captain—which I still rub my eyes to see in print. This book, as I think I have said before, is the last of the Clark Russells; it is unlikely to be written again; the Decline and Fall of the Canvas Empire.

Beyond it is a kinsprit by another master of that same empire, most of whose volumes happen to be on a different shelf. But this is unique: the first book, I think, technically published at sea. Actually published, I mean, not printed: it was broken out and copies sold in the first ocean-going bookshop, on February 15, 1924. It is Captain David Bone's *The Lookoutman,* and the title-page bears the imprint of the *High Seas Bookshop, R.M.S. Tuscania.* And here, if you are a collector of Bones, is one of the rarest of all: *Glasgow in 1901* by "James Hamilton Muir" and illustrated by Muirhead Bone. The author's name is a three-handed pseudonym, but since those concerned have never given public identification perhaps it is not my place to do so. Here also is Captain Bone's *Capstan Bars* (Porpoise Press, 1931) with his daughter's vigorous and telling woodcuts. This is a scholarly and charming revocation of the old sailors' work-songs, and it always amuses me to think of the two courageous young women who collaborated in the task. To Miss Ilah Niehoff Captain Bone sang the songs as he remembered them from old days in sail (with judicious hum-hummings here and there) and she made notation of the music. And the author's daughter illustrated them in exactly the right masculine spirit.

There are plenty more seafaring works on this shelf, including one which I fear was given me in an ironical spirit by my

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humorous shipmate R. K. L.—It is entitled *Navigation Spiritualized; or a New Compass for Seamen,* and printed "by Edmund M. Blunt, at the Newbury Port Book-Store, 1796." And before turning landward that phase concludes with Tomlinson's *The Sea and the Jungle* (the first edition, 1912, which I was able to buy for $1 in 1920, and which I subsequently saw listed as high as $250) and *Tidemarks* (1924) which concludes with one of the most noble and dreamlike passages in modern prose.

Next, by an association of ideas which is entirely personal, we find some C. E. Montague—notably *The Morning's War* (Henry Holt, 1913) which was the first Montague I read. It is dated April 1918. Nor am I likely to look at that particular region without remembering that my first of *Disenchantment* was lent and never came back. Fool indeed!

Suddenly the shelf slides into verse: of which the first example is a Millay which is perhaps unusual: the opera libretto of *The King's Henchman,* published by Fred Rullmann, Inc. (1927). I remember going to the Metropolitan Opera House, the day of the opening, not to listen to the opera but to buy the libretto. The rest of the Millays are elsewhere, for reasons of size. But here we find two odd little collections: *A Physician's Anthology of English and American Poetry* (Oxford Press, 1920) which I thought so attractive that I tried vainly for three Christmas seasons to persuade someone to buy it from Ralph Wilson, bookseller in the Hudson Terminal. The fourth Christmas Ralph concluded that the venture was hopeless and generously gave it to me himself. The other is a pleasant little anthology of amour, collected by Mitchell Kennerley in 1906 and I think the first book he published over his own imprint.

It's all very well to palaver about prose; but no one in his senses talks offhand on the poetry he loves; it's too revealing. I'll mention briefly a few that catch my eye. There's Arthur Ficke's *Sonnets of a Portrait Painter,* in the 1922 revised edition (my First I gave away) and also in the odd little faded blue reprint of Haldeman-Julius. There's Roy Campbell's *Adamastor,* which I was reading one day in a Long Island smoker and my seat-mate, unknown to me, seemed curiously interested. I could see him catching glimpses as I read, and finally he asked about the book. I offered to lend it to him, and to my astonishment it came back some time later, with a letter of warm appreciation. I see John Crowe Ransom's *Poems About God* (1919) which has special associations for me; and the first American edition of Eliot's *Waste Land.* Here's *Oxford Poetry 1922,* a book of undergraduate verse which is interesting for its early appearance of several names that have become well known in print: Richard Hughes, James Laver, W. Force Stead, John Strachey; and at least one poet of extraordinary gift of whom we have not heard as much as I should wish, Alan Porter.

Here is a little volume by an Ohio writer whose work has always seemed to me of the happiest sureness and grace, *Coach into Pumpkin* by Dorothy E. Reid, published in 1925 in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. And here, another foolishness, is a note to remind me that Christine Turner Curtis's beautiful little prose-poem *Mariposa* belonged there once and somewhere got away. Don't any publishers ever pursue those subtly talented creatures and see to it that they follow through? How do publishers spend their time anyhow?

Well, there's the *New Testament in Braid Scots* (an engaging book indeed) and then we run into Lucretius and Santayana and the shelf changes its ideas entirely . . . . I don't know how *Sloppy Joe's Cocktails Manual* (Havana, 1932) the gift of W. S. H., happens to be tucked in alongside Santayana. Can it have been the Castilian influence? At any rate the preface ("Sloppy Joe's Short Biography") would appeal to any philosopher, and the spelling of his Havana printer is a delight. In the Sandwich List we find Chiken, Turken, Sloppy-special, and Suwiss-cheese. Which suggests, at this time of the evening, a trip to the icebox.

The Critics and Robert Frost

(*Continued from page* 4)

must also somehow depersonalize it till it had the passionless beauty not of a worker but of the machine he operates. The conflict thus produced in minds conditioned to the secrecies of the not-mean-but-be theory bred a neurotic kind of poetry which was allegedly proletarian in feeling but could be read with understanding only by decadents idle and corrupt enough to afford a long initiation in symbolism. The conflict was finally resolved with a decision that the only right way to write poetry was the way Messrs. Auden, Spender, and Day Lewis wrote it. Clearly Mr. Frost didn't write that way, either, and so he was doubly damned. . . . Alas, the neurosis was to be reactivated when Auden and Lewis, as well as Edwin Muir, wrote prefaces to a new edition of "Selected Poems" and not only expressed a profound admiration for Mr. Frost's poetry but also, most charitably, conceded that its kind was right. Equations to harmonize this finding with theory are under way, and the sound you hear offstage may be interpreted as Mr. Blackmur reëxamining Mr. Frost.

In such ways literary theory chases its tail among meaningless absolutes. It is a harmless occupation which has no reference to poems, the people who write them, or the people who read them. What gave these particular theories piquancy, however, was the fact that they sanctioned Mr. Frost's practice quite as much as Mr. Eliot's or Mr. Spender's. For if it mattered, as it doesn't, you could prove Mr. Frost a complete not-mean-but-be poet and a complete proletarian poet. Whereas the surface of a Pound poem is usually roiled and that of an Eliot poem usually opaque, the surface of a Frost poem is usually limpid and clear. One kind of critic has concluded that therefore the surface is all there is to it, and has scornfully turned from it to dredge for the Golden Bough and the castration complex in "The Waste Land." If you got meaning from the surface, obviously there could be nothing underneath. Yet the communication of a Frost poem is always by experience—the shrieking truism is that you can peel off layer after layer of meaning so long as your intelligence and your knowledge last, and at the end still more than you can phrase has been experienced. More than one contributor to Mr. Thornton's book calls Frost a symbolist, and in the critical meaning of the term he is as thoroughly a symbolist as Laforgue, yet that is only a small part of the truth about him. And if the necessity of grace is to write out of the experience of laborers, then Mr. Frost is, as he once outraged a group of literary feeble-minds by admitting, the only pure proletarian poet of our time. His is the only body of poetry of this age which originates in the experience of humble people, treated with the profound respect of identification and used as the sole measure of the reality and value of all experience.

All this, however, is irrelevant. "Pressed into service means pressed out of shape." It is quite true that Frost does not write like Eliot, Pound, Auden, or Spender. Fools may conclude that he is therefore a bad or an unimportant poet, but intelligent people look at the poetry he has written. When you do that, unless your nerves are sealed with wax, you immediately and overwhelmingly perceive that it is the work of an individual and integrated poet, a poet who is like no one else, a major poet not only in regard to this age but in regard to our whole literature, a great American poet.

The most immediately recognizable attribute of any great artist is his authority. He dominates both his materials and his methods till they are inseparable from each other and from his will. (An emotion has found its thought and the thought has found its words.) To perceive the authority of Frost's later lyrics at first glance requires the reader to possess some subtlety, but surely the most forthright reader, or the most theory-bound, can perceive it in the dramatic poems—in such poems as "The Death of the Hired Man," "The Black Cottage," "A Servant to Servants," "Snow," "The Self-Seeker," "In the Home Stretch." Whether unmitigated tragedy or grounded on that spiritual security which is its triumphant opposite, they are a memorable experience of human life immediately and wholly known—and made known. They are written with a mingled harmoniousness and tenseness which completely occupies our attention, focussing it wholly on the individuals before us, and yet at the same time, by means of them, leading

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us out as far as we are capable of following toward universals.

You know these people as completely as any in literature. You are always amazed to find the poem so short because it has told so much. A packed and surcharged economy of the lines, an absolute mastery of words, strips everything to the granite. And at the same time a simple vernacular speech altogether appropriate to the people uttering it has somehow been transformed to a fresh poetic imagery, like no other in literature. You find that the simplicity was deceptive; here is a tune and orchestration of old words now heard and felt for the first time. It is subtle enough here, and it is subtler still in the lyrics, where it is translating privacies and demands more prescience of the reader. The hair which divides the false and true will not divide them if the reader is dull, as some critics seem to be. If he is not, then he will find the pure poetic glory, the fire and ice, of a language remade and a new, unique harmony created. Well, what is poetry?

"Something there is that doesn't love a wall." That is the first line of Frost's second book. There is authority in its dramatic suddenness and directness. There is authority of another kind in the suddenness with which, wholly and instantly, the full truth about the lives embodied in his poems is made known. I have shown that some very strange things indeed have been written about Frost's poetry. Surely the strangest of them was the notion voiced by Amy Lowell (and by a number of her contemporaries, among them several who have since generated a considerable sympathy for the poor) that the New England farmers in his poems were decadent and even degenerate. . . . That was the form—it has since changed — that literary snobbery took in the early 1920's. You see, these people did not have much money. . . . The decadence exhibited in his poems is that some of his characters suffer a grief which is hopeless and whose rebelliousness is futile: it is called tragedy when the Greeks do it. Such a poem as "The Death of the Hired Man" is as sharp an assertion of human kindness, and of the finality of human feeling, as has ever been made anywhere. That assertion is basic in his work, and it is all but unique in this generation: the serenity of an integrated mind which rests on a clear knowledge of human experience and an unflawed belief in its dignity. Frost's poetry is a new assertion of eternal things —that, whether in tragedy or in fulfillment, life *counts*, is worthy, can be trusted, has dignity. On that infrangible dignity, the worth of the individual's experience, he has based the stubborn singularity that has made him a variegated assortment of enemies in the last quarter-century, and all his poetic practice as well. It is the only major affirmation that modern American literature has made.

It will be the central occupation of whoever first bothers to write intelligently about the poetry of Robert Frost—rather than the ways in which that poetry differs from Eliot's. Because of it and the serenity that flows from it he has been able to maintain his prime lightness. "I want one to go with me only so far as he will go playfully." Much of the impatience that one kind of critic feels for him comes from his antic willingness to make jokes about the verities. The pure literary thinker will permit truth no handmaiden but solemnity—recall what horrid pain has been voiced in rebuke of Mark Twain. Yet God may be worshipped with conundrums, the Church was founded on a pun, and truth accepts familiarities from her familiars. It is besides a traditional habit of Yankees to say less than they mean, to say it lightly, and to let any fool go uncorrected who therefore takes them for fools. Thoreau will say the most hopelessly frivolous things, and some part of his purpose has been accomplished as soon as you show that you lack wit to plumb them. One of Frost's poems describes what happens when you look down a well with your head at the wrong angle to the sun. It is recommended to critics: look, boys—a well.

In "A Further Range" the title prefixed to some jokes, aphorisms, and wisecracks is "Ten Mills." Anyone could see that they were humorous and they therefore annoyed a number of the thoughtful, who protested at some length. But I saw no review which unraveled so much as the first obvious layer of the cocoon, the glance at "Pomes Penyeach." It is characteristic of the Yankee mind to spin the cocoon most thickly across the ports that open most directly on itself, and you will find Frost most frivolous, or most cryptic and sibylline, when he is speaking from the deepest wisdom his own experience has deposited on his heart. I hope that criticism will some day examine the lyrics. In such fairly transparent ones as "Good-Bye and Keep Cold" and "Two Look at Two" it will find some surprising things, if it applies to them a decent tenth of the exploration it has devoted to "The Hollow Men." If it then moves on to such more difficult ones as "The Lovely Shall Be Choosers," it will have to repudiate some judgments it has made in print or make absurd its own description of the poetic process. When Frost was annoying the thoughtful by describing himself as a sensibilitist, he was considerate enough not to add that he is also an atomist. If he had, literary confusion would have been increased, but Nils Bohr would have known what he meant.

It is not by chance that even so brief a summary as this has had to allude twice to Thoreau. There is such a thing as continuity in literature, and behind Frost are the generations of men in New England. In his perceptions, in his humor, in his accent, in the undeluded clarity of his vision, in his lifelong concentration on the individual and on the rights, dignities, and sanctities of the individual, he is a neighbor of Thoreau's—who had traveled much in Concord, as Frost in Derry, Franconia, and South Shaftsbury. Nearly a century apart, they would have known each other by the same genius of the place, the same instant assertion of human dignity, the same cadence of thought, a rhythm deeper than consciousness, of the bloodstream itself. "I do not see how he can ever die; nature cannot spare him." "He was prince of heartachers amid countless achers of another part." "Rescue the drowning and tie your shoe-strings. Take your time, and set about some free labor." "By throwing away patience and joining the impatient in one last rush on the citadel of evil, the hope is we may end the need of patience." "In Arcadia, when I was there, I did not see any hammering stone." "Sand grains should sugar in the natal dew the babe born to the desert." "I did not wish to take a cabin passage but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains." "You can't sail by the north star at the south pole." "I wonder if something isn't due the victor in a war." "Our inventions are wont to be but pretty toys which distract our attention from serious things. They are but improved means to an unimproved end." "May I live to the end in premises and rest in processes." . . . If you are quite sure you can tell Frost from Thoreau in these sentences casually chosen from five contexts, you must nevertheless recognize that both minds are oriented by the same map.

It has been the curious folly of criticism in our time to stand constantly at the passages of Jordan and require poets to pronounce a password. One year it has been Shibboleth and another year Sibboleth, but in both years those who spoke it a different way were slain. Unquestionably Eliot's poetry is not like Auden's, and Frost's is different from both. But intelligence is content to find beauty and wisdom in poetry wherever they exist, no matter who the poet or by what theory he may—idiotically—be supposed to have written. "The utmost of ambition is to lodge a few poems where they will be hard to get rid of." Frost has lodged a good many poems there. They will be hard to get rid of—harder, I believe, than any others written by an American in our time. Steeped in Whitman, knowing my Eliot by heart as well as commentary, admiring Robinson as most of my colleagues once did but do no longer, I nevertheless think of Frost as the finest American poet, living or dead. That, of course, is subjective; you do not prove "best" and "finest," and no one need adopt my judgment. But to ignore the attributes of greatness briefly glanced at here is to make a fool of yourself in public. Lovers of poetry have not committed that asininity.

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Facts Invade Boosterland

BY RICHARD G. LILLARD

CHAMBER-of-commerce evangelism is giving way to popularized adult education. The species of advertising called booster literature is still selling America first, and the traveler in the United States still moves in a world of predicted wonders. Provincial Utopias and recreational New Edens continue to announce themselves in optimistic and exaggerated bulletins written in a hackneyed style, but new trends in travel publicity are producing booklets fairer to their material and more artistic in form, which hardly seem to fit the traditional label, boosterism. The change comes in the era of the New Deal's interest in the common man, and significantly much of the best of the new informative travel-urging comes from state agencies, which do all that private boosterism has done, plus giving the tourist a better chance to know the truth. John Public will leave as much money behind as he did previously, but he will now be more benefited than exploited.

Booster literature is much more abundant than most people realize. It is published by convention and tourist bureaus and chambers of commerce in cities and towns and in some counties, by many states and by Uncle Sam, by resorts, hotels, fairs, bridges, railroads, bus and air and boat and streetcar lines, by school camps and a few colleges offering summer sessions, and by oil companies—especially by several with travel services, like the very accommodating Conoco Travel Bureau of Denver, Colorado. No city or region has a monopoly on boosterism, as national advertising in magazines indicates. No geographical or corporate unit concerned with travel is without its supply of come-here writings. Three hundred requests by mail will shortly bring a 100-pound deluge of maps and cartographs, folders, handbook guides, statistical surveys, rotogravures, prospectuses, magazines, and even bound volumes, all emphasizing alleged features and distributing quotas of fact and fancy.

Much of this has characteristics too well known to require elaborate discussion. The maps and guides are useful, but the prose accounts and the subtitles all too often contain second-person exhortation, impressionistic phrases separated by triple dots, personifications of geographical areas, and habitual pairing of complimentary adjective with lyrical noun. Almost anything can be famed or outstanding or beautiful, and merely by being over fifty years old can be historic. Innumerable objects are famous, known or obscure, from "Maine's famous 2500 lakes and ponds and 5000 rivers and streams" to the "world famous gorillas at the San Diego Zoo." Then there must always be a tag phrase: West Virginia, "The Land of Mountains"; "Wonderful Wyoming"; Reno, "The Metropolis of 100,000 Square Miles of Opportunity"; St. Louis, "City of a Thousand Sights"; Santa Fe, "The City Different"; Kansas, "The Land of Golden Horizons"; "Unspoiled Vermont." There are many gateways, including Annapolis, "Gateway to the South," and Davenport, "Eastern Gateway to Iowa." In the West it is good boosterism to be "America's last wilderness." Towns in the South and Southwest founded by French or Spanish proclaim Old World atmospheres. The Middle-Atlantic and New England states have their colonial traditions.

Hotels and resorts and dude ranches, and even a number of the railroads with their handsome booklets, show no great tendency to free themselves from the tyranny of words, but among many of the cities and states there are encouraging signs of a rising critical sense. Convenient and useful are the small handbooks issued by several big cities, Detroit and Philadelphia among them, on What to See and Do. Proper names and plain nouns speak for themselves amazingly well without adjectival elaboration. Other cities, Seattle, Richmond, and Chicago included, put out booklets with excellent small photographs and a minimum of printed matter. The Stockton, California, Chamber of Commerce sets an example of objectivity in dealing with picturesque materials, in its "Ghost Towns," on the relics of the gold rush of '49. Two examples of similarly compact neo-boosterism among the states are "Travel Seasons in Virginia" and an informative "Indians of New Mexico." All these items of legitimate publicity reform florid prosody by compromising with the sort of statistics and data that some manufacturing cities, wishing to attract industrialists, not sightseers, have been sending out. The Lynds' "Middletown," Muncie, Indiana, for instance, sends a map of the city streets, a five-page mimeographed list of Muncie manufacturers, and a "Statistical Survey" of the city. The New Haven Railroad and several steamship lines have obtained prose accounts with acceptable literary substance by hiring Walter Pritchard Eaton to write "Nantucket" and "Martha's Vineyard," which are simply written and well produced, the former with drawings by John Held, Jr.

The activity of state bureaus combines an enlightened awareness of the profits of regionalism with a desire to publicize the meritorious conservation movement. Forty-seven states have not created 876 (in 1936) state parks for nothing. Michigan and New York have as many as sixty-three each. The state parks preserve scenic and recreational areas, geological wonders, botanical and zoological rarities, and archeological and historical remains. Booklets describe these and suggest other attractive features of interest to studious or pleasure-loving travelers living in a state or outside of it. Often the typography and photography are as praiseworthy as the matter-of-fact writing. These publications appeal primarily to the summer visitor. Very few states give space to winter sports. A dozen Midwestern commonwealths boost their state parks. South Dakota stresses its two features, the Black Hills and the Bad Lands. New Hampshire and North Carolina demonstrate their recreations by zones in elevation. Mississippi suggests its wealth of legend and literature. A handful of states, including Florida and North Dakota, are patently interested in making much of their opportunities for farmers. Kentucky publishes a quarterly, several highway commissions have monthlies, and so on. The aims and purposes of the states are suggested by names of sample booster agencies: Pennsylvania Scenic and Historic Commission, Mississippi Advertising Commission, New York Conservation Department, North Dakota Department of Labor and Agriculture, Ohio Department of Highways, Virginia State Commission on Conservation and Development, Greater Iowa Commission, Missouri State Fish and Game Department, and New Mexico Tourist Bureau. There are several semi-official agencies, like the All-Year Club of Southern California and the Southeastern Michigan Tourist and Publicity Bureau. A letter to the office of any governor will bring a return, directly or indirectly—if indirectly the return may involve a flood of ads from hotels and resorts legitimately "tipped off." Some of the state booklets contain bibliographies of books and pamphlets and tell where to obtain them. This is true notably of the official publications of the six New England states.

The most dignified and useful pamphlets of all come from the National Park Service and deal with its twenty-six national parks and sixty-eight national

Courtesy Union Pacific

"JUST LOAFING IS AN ART AND FUN—ON THE RANCH"

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monuments, plus other projects and historical and military parks. The Service has published sober factual material for years, but booklets printed in the last five years or so have a fresh format and fine illustrations. They contain information and rates on transportation and lodging, historical synopses, suggestions on what to wear and what to see and do, bibliographies, and special discussions in simple yet scientific language of the features of the park. One can learn, for example, of ice erosion in Glacier Park, exploration and trapping and mountaineering in the Grand Teton country, sandstone erosion in Zion Park, and desert plants in Death Valley. "Glimpses of Our National Parks," as revised and expanded by Isabelle F. Story, is a handy summary of the federal wonderlands. The Park Service will mail out these booklets free to interested persons. It also maintains the U. S. Tourist Bureau at 45 Broadway, New York City. Its work fits into the larger informational services of the Department of the Interior, which issues free two large wall-maps, "United States Recreational Areas, with Connecting Railways and Airways," and "Recreational Areas of the United States," showing the main highways in the country. By indicating national forests, Indian reservations, national parks and monuments, and the location of state parks (listed in full on the back), these maps are signally useful to any prospective traveler. And they don't use a single adjective! But so that Mr. Ickes's Department shall not get all the credit, let it be pointed out that Mr. Wallace's Department of Agriculture, through its local headquarters for national forests, will send out free maps of the respective forests, with roads, trails, campgrounds, and settlements clearly marked.

The whole trend really to inform travelers finds full parallel in realistic full-length books outside the boundaries of this article, Mary Austin's books about the Southwest, say, or Vance Randolph's about the Ozarks, or Carl Carmer's about Alabama and New York, or the many books about the Northeast. Now the W. P. A. Guides are coming out, giving states as comprehensive treatment as they may ever receive again; more so, perhaps, when you hear the protests of official Massachusetts at learning that Sacco and Vanzetti are mentioned in a guide book. Imagine telling a traveler about social problems! Undoubtedly the W. P. A. researches, in part at least, will be put into pamphlet form for cheap and wide distribution. One example is at hand: "Hikes in Berks," compiled by the Berks County (Pennsylvania) unit of the W. P. A. Writer's Project.

An increasing proportion of photography in booster matter is a distinct boon, for, properly enough, the best in promotional literature is visual appeal through pictures. More than any inspirational chants they can impress a reader and make him wish to travel. Even though photographs, if cleverly taken, can imply more than the truth, they can show the reader in a glance what no adjective-laden prose could. Boosterism abandons a confusion in the arts when it takes to pictures. The trite "words cannot describe" is correct. Except for necessary information or background, which words can give, a traveler-to-be wants sensory experiences, inklings. Photographs give them to him and are the things next best to actual traveling. He can feel surer of pictures than of language. The more enterprising states and cities have learned to use excellent photo-engravings on smooth paper, with short captions or brief prose accompaniments worked into the layout. Northern Pacific, Santa Fe, Burlington, and other transcontinental railroads reproduce fine views and give American scenery the endorsement of Big Business.

Any traveler willing to take pains can find out what he wants to know. The federal and state boosters help all classes of tourists, including the last frontiersmen, the non-trailer campers. Persons interested in spas and hotels with private beaches, cocktail bars, and cuisines with a continental air will write chambers of commerce in resort towns or advertisers in fashionable magazines. Those who want dude-ranch life, with rugged mountains, garden food, horses, and informality, will write the Dude Ranchers' Association, Billings, Montana, or the Colorado Dude and Guest Ranch Association, Denver, or will get one of the railroad booklets, like Union Pacific's "Dude Ranches." Autoists have the facilities of automobile clubs and oil companies. Greyhound has pamphlets and a bi-monthly magazine to offer bus patrons.

Courtesy Chicago & North Western

"PLENTY OF SCENIC THRILLS ON MT. CARMEL HIGHWAY"

Inevitably, despite its bulk, booster literature has one major failing. To be true to its category it must touch on bright aspects only. Such is the law of Boosterland. The National Park Service almost escapes censure, since it describes unusually Utopian reservations, but it might comment realistically on the prices in dining rooms and stores in the monopoly-protected concessions. There may be a reason why Grand Canyon is jestingly called Fred Harvey National Park. Boosterism in general practically ignores certain very interesting sociological features that many travelers read of in books and magazines and wish to see: share croppers, coal-mining towns, assembly lines, slum dwellings, poverty-stricken mountaineers, mansions of millionaires. Baltimore and Atlanta omit mention of the Negro slums. A rare exception is "New York—the Magic Island," issued by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, which contrasts photographs of a slum tenement and a block of Fifth Avenue apartments. Completely unmentioned are such striking realities as the dust areas in Kansas and Oklahoma, the drought-killed cottonwoods in Nebraska and South Dakota, the mountains of coal and the coal cranes on the waterfronts of ports on the Great Lakes, the gullies from soil erosion in Alabama and other Southern states, the Tom Mooney case in California, and the Republican majority in Vermont. Traditional boosterism cannot with good conscience mention these matters, though they are manifestly of interest to alert travelers.

None the less the traveler in America profits from publicity written to show the sunny side up. Myth is dying out in Boosterland, to be replaced by interpretation and fact, fact that is helpful, not just dry statistics or uncorrelated boast about the largest this or the oldest that, and not hortatory oddities like Miami Beach is 300 miles south of Cairo, Egypt, or Kansas is larger than England and Wales. Let these become the province alone of the schoolmarms who are fascinated by indiscriminate general information. Disciplined by the newer boosterism, with a fresh point of view, we go to Williamsburg, not to worship at a historic shrine, but to take an objective half-day's seminar in colonial history. We go to the foot of Yosemite Falls, not to honor God or some pantheistic deity for making the highest falls in the world, but to hear a well-informed ranger explain how a glacier makes a U-shaped valley, leaving hanging valleys to dump waterfalls over the edge. Granted that boasts and superlatives are the verbal devices most likely to stir us Americans—we are attuned to them—they are none too useful to the genuine traveler, who wants to see and experience and know.

Booster literature is an important branch of journalism, suggesting a multiplicity of activities and distributing significant and applicable information. It publicizes the resources which the conservation movement is saving for the public. It does its part to break down the provincialisms of big-city dwellers and "mountain people" alike. By making us aware of things American it makes a contribution to enlightened nationalism.

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The Rise of the C.I.O.

C. I. O.: Industrial Unionism in Action. By J. Raymond Walsh. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by PAUL H. DOUGLAS

MR. WALSH has written a timely and an interesting book. He has told the highlights in the development of the C. I. O. during the last two years with especial emphasis upon the steel, automobile, and rubber industries, where the new industrial unions have won their greatest gains. Prior to the coming of the C. I. O., American unionism—outside of coal mining and the railroads—was primarily confined to the plants of small employers which were more or less peripheral to the main streams of industrial production. Craft unionism of the type which was given predominant jurisdiction within the A. F. of L. showed itself relatively impotent to organize such great mass production industries as steel, autos, machinery, rubber, electrical appliances, etc. This was due to many reasons, among which were the economic power of the employing companies and the difficulty of getting the unions effectively to coöperate in a joint drive for membership. In addition, it was almost equally difficult to work out a basis for allotting those who did join to respective unions. Moreover, the great mass of those employed in these giant plants did not want to be divided into a large number of separate craft units when they were in fact largely interchangeable, and they feared that the employers—by playing off one union against another—could in effect defeat them. They were, therefore, more or less deaf to the craft approach, while the program of the C. I. O. to organize all the workers in a given plant in one union had a distinct popular appeal. This appeal, together with the vigorous leadership of the C. I. O., and the fact that the government in general has not been unfriendly to labor, has led to the organization of nearly two million new members within the space of the last year.

At the same time that the C. I. O. has been growing, the A. F. of L. has likewise been expanding. The jurisdiction of some of its unions has been broadened; organizational activity has been increased; and numerous employers hitherto hostile to unionism, but now sensitive to the tide of unionization, have signed contracts with the A. F. of L. unions. The developments have thus far, therefore, been a stimulus to unionization, although if the present split is long continued, it is likely to be disastrous. This danger would be intensified if the present recession should turn into a depression and be also accompanied by a violent counter-offensive on the part of the employing groups. Mr. Walsh is, therefore, right in appealing to the statesmanship of both groups to find a path to unity.

As I have implied, I like this book. There are, nevertheless, two major issues to which Mr. Walsh gives inadequate consideration. The first is the fact that within any modern industry, there is still a wide variety of differences in skill and, hence, numerous crafts. Industrial unionism must therefore develop some method of giving adequate representation to the interests of the skilled as well as to those of the mass production workers, and of recognizing these differences properly in the wage scales which the unions negotiate. Secondly, Mr. Walsh accepts altogether too blithely the proposal that collective bargaining in the textile industry should be accompanied by price and production controls to protect the manufacturers. From the experience of the N. R. A. with such agreements, this might easily lead to an exploitation of the consuming public and to the choking off of demand, production, and unemployment by excessive price increases. I am one of those who believe that we should introduce more competition in the fixation of prices instead of freezing the price structure still further. But to elaborate this point fully would take a book in itself.

Paul H. Douglas is in the department of economics of the University of Chicago.

History by Formula

RECONSTRUCTION: THE BATTLE FOR DEMOCRACY. By James S. Allen. New York: International Publishers. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by GEORGE C. HOMANS

THIS is a Marxist-Leninist history of the Reconstruction Era. The Marxists have decided that the American Civil War was a revolution, that it was analogous to the great French Revolution, and that it is to be interpreted as they interpret the French Revolution, as a struggle between the Bourbons (the southern planters) and the bourgeois (the northern industrialists), who had to overthrow the slave economy because it blocked the development of capitalism. This formula at once gets the Marxists in trouble with the facts. First, that slavery in the South blocked the development of capitalism is simply asserted, no demonstration is offered. In fact, capitalism developed rapidly in the North before the Civil War in spite of slavery and slowly in the South even after slavery was abolished. Second, a large section of the industrial and moneyed classes in the North, the Copperheads, who ought to be typical bourgeois in the Marxist sense, opposed abolition and the Civil War. To be sure they made money when war came; none the less they opposed its coming. The group which more than any other brought on the War, the Abolitionists, were not the masters of the new industries but what we should now call sentimental intellectuals.

A central point in the present strategy of the Communist Party is agitation for equal rights for Negroes in the South. Therefore, this book insists, unlike other histories of Reconstruction, that Reconstruction did not go far enough, that the Negroes ought to have kept the ballot and have seized the lands of the planters. Admittedly they could have accomplished this only if the Union armies had remained for decades in the South and had steadily supported the Negroes. Whether or not this would have been for the good of the country can be decided only by one's sentiments. But even in its analysis of the facts this book is often what Bacon might have called a history as one would.

The Continental Stage

THE THEATER IN A CHANGING EUROPE. By Thomas H. Dickinson and others. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by RICHARD LOCKRIDGE

MR. DICKINSON'S survey is comprehensive and informing, compact but at the same time, and in most instances, full enough to give the student a very fair picture of theatrical conditions in all the countries of the continent which may be said, with however much optimism, to possess a theater. And it is surely not the fault of Mr. Dickinson, or of his collaborators, that Europe seems, in the theater as elsewhere, to be changing chiefly for the worse.

Yet one does lay aside the book a little dolefully, because it is clear that things are going none too well. In Soviet Russia, as surveyed by Joseph Gregor and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, there is, to be sure, feverish activity. They do Gogol's "Inspector General" there in a hundred ways, and millions see it. Actors perform on ladders and hang by their toes from scaffolding. Everyone acts; trade unionists turn to the stage after hard days at lathes, and do amazingly well. But as for plays—. There are many reasons why the plays should not be up to much, in a period so acutely transitional, under a government so intent on liquidating heresy. The plays, it appears are not up to much, even to Mr. Dana's friendly eyes.

What of Germany? Julius Bab writes what is easily the most informative and cleanly thought essay. And after the war for some years there was an amazingly fecund period; a period of many false starts, no doubt, of much extravagantly purposeless activity. But a lively period. Mr. Bab dwells on this time with satisfaction, as must any one interested in the theater of the world. He postpones, as is natural to a German proud of the accomplishments of his race, consideration of today. But he must come to it; finally he must write: "These developments in the German theater, so rich in adventures of the spirit and covering two decades, had not come to an end when in 1929 they were checked by the new economic and political crises, and finally were broken off by the National-Socialist revolution of 1933."

Writing of Italy, Silvio D'Amico, who is still there, must cling to Pirandello and piously hope for the best and hardly hint at any doubts he may have of the future of art under dictatorship. The red fire in Spain is not simulated; powder smoke engulfs Benavente and the sweet Quinteros. In France, Edmond See praises Giraudoux, author of "Amphitryon 38," and Jacques Duval, who achieved "Tovarich," and hopes that the present "period of stagnation" is "surely only a period of transition" and the precursor of "an even greater variety, richness and power" in the French drama. One shares his hope. One hopes also for the theaters of Rumania, Hungary, Poland, and the other nations here represented. Things are pretty bad now, and surely better days are coming. Americans may take consolation; we are doing better than most.

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A Program for Non-Resistance

MUST WE GO TO WAR? By Kirby Page. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $1.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

PEACE, like politics, makes strange bedfellows. In the face of the contemporary confusion in Europe, many of the peace societies long noted for their support of collective security have joined with their once favorite enemy, Mr. Hearst, in spreading the alarm about entangling alliances, particularly British alliances. As regards the current invasion in China, the communists seem as perturbed as our retired admirals over the menace of fascist Japan. Even the technicalities of neutrality have brought together many traditional opponents. In his solution for our many ailments, foreign and domestic, Mr. Kirby Page is not entirely free of this fashionable eclecticism in his advocacy of the Christian socialism and pacifism of which he has so long been an outstanding exponent.

Many diverse theories of international relations receive the wrath of Mr. Page. The older methods of diplomatic protection of nationals and their property abroad are castigated as unworthy of civilized nations. The newer concepts of collective security maintained by sanctions or an international police force are denounced as both immoral and impractical. Perhaps the most effective chapter is that which disposes of the so-called righteousness of the great democracies—Britain, France, and the United States. Declaring that the moral indignation of these satiated states is merely that of successful robbers who have already stored away their loot, Mr. Page urges sympathetic treatment of Italian and German demands, especially in the economic field. To the American Government, he recommends revision of our neutrality legislation to include the popular system of undeclared wars and the withdrawal of our armed forces from the Far East. To the American citizen, he recommends pledges of war resistance and constructive peace activities. In a concluding chapter on civil war, the author takes issue with many radicals by decrying violence in the establishment of socialism in the United States.

The reader's reaction to this book will necessarily depend on his principles and prejudices in respect of human conduct in general and international relations in particular. Granted Mr. Page's premise, that violence is unethical and passive resistance is effective, the argument flows for the most part logically and forcefully. At least two contradictions, however, can be noted in the general program. In simultaneously urging furtherance of the Hull trade program and abolition of intervention abroad, the author is less cogent than Professor Charles Beard, who combines economic isolation with political isolation. In simultaneously urging stricter neutrality legislation and entrance into the League of Nations without commitments to sanctions, Mr. Page has overlooked the all too apparent fact that a League without effective coercion is no League at all.

Although the policy of peace at any price is vigorously asserted, there is throughout this volume a regrettable unevenness of writing, arising from long and undigested quotations, selections from many different translations of the Bible, and a slightly abrupt ending. Too much has been undertaken within its confines and too little said with regard to the major points in the program.

Exploding Earth

RADIUM. By Rudolf Brunngraber. New York: Random House. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by HOMER W. SMITH

WHEN, in 1896, Marie Curie discovered the mysterious, invisible radiations given off by a lump of pitch blende, the curtain rose on one of the most spectacular dramas of science. The separation of radium and allied radioactive elements was to cause physicists to completely reorganize their views about the nature of matter and energy and the structure of atoms, and to place in their hands the long-sought tool for the transmutation of the elements. The medical world was drawn into the commotion by the hope that radium might be an elixir of life, but among a hundred false alarms this substance proved to be of value only as an agent for the therapy of cancer—though this alone, of course, was enough to make it a priceless boon to mankind. It proved an enormously expensive one to obtain.

Using for the most part fictitious characters, Brunngraber has woven the history of radium into a novel in which selfish, avaricious capitalists fight for world control of this strange commodity while poor men suffer and die of cancer, physicians and physicists are unable to investigate its possibilities, and subordinate characters fall in love at first sight, go mad at Armentières, or make incredible discoveries with x-rays. His novel fails to measure up to its worthy subject matter. No doubt the author put considerable research into the physics, geology, geography, finance, and medicine which form the substratum of his story, and in the early part of the book these matters are presented in a convincing manner; but as soon as he departs from matters of record he indulges in scientifically offensive speculations on electromagnetic waves and the homing instinct of pigeons, on the ethereal undulations of typhoid bacilli, and on curing cancer by wearing copper rings.

As a literary work the book is cumbersome and inanimate. The narrative and even more the conversations are so stilted, elaborate, or artificial as sometimes to be appalling.

That the book has suffered from poor translation is evident in many places, for its sentences are frequently lumbering and sometimes wholly obscure, and it lacks familiarity with English or American idiom. But no translation, as indeed no quantity of interesting historical data, strung between the card-board hands of card-board figures, can make a story worth reading.

To Russia and Back

PROLETARIAN JOURNEY. By Fred E. Beal. New York: Hillman-Curl, Inc. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by LOUIS ADAMIC

FRED BEAL is a fugitive from justice; in the foreword to his book, he gives his address as "Nowhere." The word is more than a geographical evasion—it is the despairing epitome of a man of action frustrated by circumstance and his passion for truth.

No "proletarian" *via* Karl Marx and Union Square, Beal's rise as a labor leader was a logical derivation out of his background. Of Yankee stock, he was innately driven by his Puritan instincts not only to recognize evil and injustice but to endeavor to effect their amendment. At fourteen he went into a Lawrence textile mill, and was shortly precipitated into the strike that brought Big Bill Haywood upon the scene. The boy came out of the event with an I. W. W. card and the initial stirrings of class-consciousness.

A sincere fellow, with the knack of delivering straight talk, zealous in his efforts to better workers' conditions, Beal was cut out to be an organizer. He joined the Communist Party and within a few months, on Party orders, he was sent into the South.

Gastonia marked the first significant clash between Southern labor and exploiting industrialists. Out simply to win the strike he had brought about, Beal was disheartened to learn that the Communist Party, to whom he looked for aid, was interested mainly in making momentary political hay out of the situation; although only two Negroes had worked in the Loray mill, he was ordered to emphasize the Negro question. On top of that he discovered that the strikers' relief funds, sorely needed, "were being used to pay the expenses of Party members traveling to Moscow."

Finally, framed by the desperate men whose stranglehold on cheap labor he threatened, Beal was tried and sentenced to twenty years. Out on bail, while his case was being appealed, he was gripped by the desire to see Soviet Russia before going to prison. Once there, he found it impossible to return to America. The Comintern had decided he must "jump bail"—his voluntary return to prison would be too obvious a commentary on the workers' Fatherland.

"If ever a man was prepared to believe completely in the Soviet Union, that man was I." But Beal could not corroborate his anticipations. Disillusioned, sick at heart, he escaped to America, to take his chances with prison.

Beal is a man who shaped his life around a dream and functioned from its core. There is a note of pathos in this book, the pathos of a believer who found Russian communism incompatible with his ideals, who has been diverted by truth from the path on which he had thought to find it. That, perhaps, apart from the important social and economic implications, is the book's most vivid achievement. In blunt direct writing that has the strength of vernacular is given the record of a man and his aspiration.

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The New Books

Art

THE IMPRESSIONISTS. With an introduction by Wilhelm Uhde. New York: Oxford University Press. $3.

CEZANNE. With an Introduction by Fritz Novotny. The same.

These two volumes of prints in color and in black and white are importations from Austria and good examples of the excellent work, especially in color, now being done in Vienna. The low price is really extraordinary in consideration of the quality of the product. Let the prospective purchaser look at the marvelous reproduction of the paint ridges in Edouard Manet's "White Peonies." Among the impressionists Manet, Pissarro, Sisley, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Gaugin, Lautrec, are represented. The Cézanne volume is excellent for study.

H. S. C.

Belles Lettres

THREE ROSSETTIS: Unpublished Letters to and from Dante Gabriel, Christina, William. Edited by Janet Camp Troxell. Harvard University Press. 1937. $3.50.

This learnedly edited work consists of unpublished letters to and from Dante Gabriel, Christina, and William Rossetti, collected by Mrs. Troxell, who can boast a collection of Rossetti material unique in this country and comparable to any in England. The letters fall between the years 1850 and 1903. They include some that Elizabeth Siddall wrote to her husband. The story of the famous exhumation of D. G. Rossetti's poems is told, with a series of letters to Charles Augustus Howell. Christina writes her brother long letters about her own poems. Altogether this book is a distinct addition to published material concerning the Rossettis, William Michael himself having his own proper section. There are reproductions of drawings, letters, and documents.

W. R. B.

Biography

THE RIDDLE OF NAPOLEON. By Raoul Brice. Putnams. 1937. $3.75.

This new biography of Napoleon was awarded the Prix Berger by the French Academy last summer. Its author, who is a Surgeon Lieutenant-General in the French Army, believes that not one of the thousand interpreters of the Emperor has really understood him. The incredible inconsistencies of his character have baffled them all, and led each individual diagnostician into some theory that is as inconsistent as its subject. General Brice therefore offers, with confidence and a generous display of occult erudition, his own explanation, which emphasizes three aspects of Napoleon's personality: his Corsican heritage, his innate and unconquerable hatred of England, and his vulnerability to superstition. The second is familiar ground, the other two are less explored; but General Brice argues, with telling effect, that they are inextricably bound up with each other, that the answer to the riddle is to be found only in the Corsican birthright. In his late years Napoleon himself sought to discredit all ties that bound him to his native island, but the Corsican spirit, its almost primitive psychology, its superstitions, its patriarchal solidity, its anti-Gallic insularity, was in his blood and was responsible for his conduct at every stage of his career. It is a provocative thesis persuasively presented; and the book as a whole, which is frank character analysis rather than chronological narrative, is a valuable complement to such straightforward biographies as that of Bainville.

C. D. A.

Fiction

TISH MARCHES ON. By Mary Roberts Rinehart. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.

This is the fourth book of Tish stories from that indefatigable and popular romancer, who has produced so many novels, mysteries, short stories, and travel books. Letitia Carberry's achievements are always highly entertaining, and here are six new episodes about her, strung together into a fantastic tale, which involves a visit to the late coronation of King George VI. Readers of *The Saturday Evening Post* know the perennial but adventurous spinster well. For light entertainment and train-reading "Tish" is one of the better characters. She gets into plenty of trouble, but always manages to preserve a calm and salty wisdom.

W. R. B.

THE LONG WAY HOME. By Sylvia Chatfield Bates. Harcourt, Brace. 1937. $2.50.

The Connecticut River, the Erie Canal, the Indian and Civil Wars, the California trek, It's a Long Way to Tipperary, penthouses and New England coast villages, the stock market crash and the secret wounds in the hearts of several generations of women, are a large order for one book; and though "The Long Way Home" is a very long book it is not tightly enough built to hold all this material. The effect of the many characters and settings, and the immense span of years, is confusing, despite the fact that now and again a scene or a woman's face is vivid for a flash, the reader is a good bit of the time unsure where things are happening, or when, or why.

The first part of the book, covering the period from the Pequot Raids until 1912 or so, has a wistful Louisa Alcott charm, and the old house on the Connecticut River is nostalgic romance. But a historical novel needs more than happily quoted hymn tunes and references to the Sweet Singer, Mrs. Sigourney; Walter Edmonds and Kenneth Roberts have set a standard which Sylvia Chatfield Bates has unhappily failed to emulate.

When the last of the Bowen women, Ellen Swain, settles in to post-war New York the novel steps frankly into the women's lending library field, and is there successful enough. It has sufficient color, detail, and food, enough well-timed deaths, silent brave suffering, and genteelly phrased sexual emancipation to please the large audience to whom it is addressed and to whom it can be cheerfully recommended.

F. W.

THE REBELLION OF LENNIE BARLOW. By Phil Stong. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.

This is a brief, unimportant, but attractive novel of a young Southern boy in Pittsville, Iowa. Mr. Stong's former novels of rural American life have endeared him to a large public. Lennie Barlow is a Southerner among Yankees, and the story of what he accomplished in regard to narrow conservatism and an unintelligent educational system in a small community, simply by being himself, a groping but courageous American youngster, has its points of interest. Characters and dialect are convincing—but one feels this is merely an intermediate book for Mr. Stong, one that he has, so to speak, written almost with his left hand. It has humor but also a somewhat saccharine quality. It seems to partake both of adult and juvenile fiction.

L. C. H.

Miscellaneous

EUROPE TODAY. By Sherwood Eddy. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $1.50.

In the last few years the market has been flooded with books about Europe. Here is another, consisting of brief impressions gleaned by Dr. Eddy on his latest trip to that unhappy continent. One wonders why it was published. If one finds fault with this book, it is not so much because of its facts and interpretations (although these may be open to challenge in some particulars), but rather because the author says nothing that has not already been reiterated many times. In Germany he finds a regimented state capitalism and a regime devoid of constructive spiritual content; in Russia a ruling party ruthlessly "purged," but withal a stable government and continued economic and social progress; in Scandinavia, a hopeful cooperative democratic system; and in Spain a Loyalist government with Communists and enthusiastic volunteers as the driving forces.

J. C. deW.

ATLANTIC GAME FISHING. By S. Kip Farrington, Jr. Color illustrations by Lynn Bogue Hunt. Introduction by Ernest Hemingway. Kennedy Bros. 1937. $7.50.

This book covers the sport of angling for game fish, large and small, from Nova Scotia to the West Coast of Florida, including also the Bahamas and Bermuda. The edition is plentifully illustrated with colored prints by Lynn Bogue Hunt and numerous other photographs. It is of interest to the novice as well as to the expert. It is a narrative, an encyclopedia of the sport, a reference and guide book. It contains a fund of information as to where, when, and how to fish, even to giving the names of the best guides and ideas of accommodations.

A chapter on tackle and ethics covers the kind of reels, rods, and lines to be

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used for the taking of various types and sizes of fish, from the express traveling bone-fish to the 800-pound tuna.

The giant tuna and sword fish of Nova Scotia, the white marlin and striped bass of Long Island and New Jersey, the sail-fish of Palm Beach and Miami, the bone-fish, baracuda, and sharks of the Keys, all pass in review. Even the silvery tarpon of the West Coast come to life, as they jump clear of the water, trying to shake out the hook. Bogue Hunt's illustration of a large wahoo taking a feather lure off St. David's Head, Bermuda, is artistic realism.

The chapter on black marlin and giant tuna at Cat Kep and Bimini is an excellent description of the technique and physical skill required to bring these fish to gaff. A challenge to the woman angler is contained in the following quotation: "let them be warned that in the front hall of the Compleat Angler, is a fine pine box which is being reserved for the first woman who catches a tuna off this Island (Bimini)."

We feel certain that anyone who reads this book will not only enjoy its contents but will wish to have it with him at all times, as a ready reference on the subject of big and small game fishing.

E. W. D.

YOGA EXPLAINED. By F. Yeats-Brown. Viking. 1937. $2.

Readers of this book are invited to bring their bodies with them. Yoga is not a religion or a doctrine, but a system of physical and mental training for self-realization, and is not to be apprehended verbally. Yeats-Brown's modest purpose is to condense out of his twenty or more years of experience a précis of Yogic practice for Western use. He seems eminently successful. His tone of voice is quiet, assured, and wise. He sins neither in over-advocacy nor in under-explanation. He knows Yoga by having lived with it, and he knows the ordinary Western prejudgment of it. Despite these favorable auspices, parts of his book, at least to those who have not tried Yoga, must seem pure wish-fantasy. Many will not be convinced that Yoga is not an Eastern mirage. Whether it is or not, this simple lucid account is certain to be informing and probably, in many cases, inspiring.

J. R.

Poetry

THE NEW WORLD. By Edgar Lee Masters. Appleton-Century. 1937. $2.50.

It is hard to determine what has happened to betray the once powerful gift of Edgar Lee Masters unless it is his reckless demon of productivity. Within the last two years Masters has published a lengthy autobiography, a novel, two biographies of other poets, and two books of poems—six volumes of declining merit. The decline is not in the material; the books on Whitman and Lindsay contained arresting ideas, and "Poems of People," for all its diffuseness, displayed an unusual range of interests and understanding. But the style—the style which is not only the man, but, as Robert Frost has suggested, the way the man conducts himself—has suffered lamentably. It slides from the hortatory down to the bathetic, and rises heavily from statistics to garrulity.

"The New World" is typical of Masters's later manner. It furnishes the greatest possible antithesis to his landmark, "Spoon River Anthology," written almost a quarter of a century ago. Where that deservedly famous work was keen in observation, compact in phrase, and exciting in effect, the present composition is blurred in outline, sprawling in language, and (at least to one dogged reader) tiresome. Superficially, "The New World" is an epic—the jacket hails it as a triumphant epic of America "spiritually, culturally, martially, economically, as to literature, customs, laws, wars, disasters, heroic and prominent characters." This is a large order, and even the most doughty reader will have to admit that the author has bitten off more culture, characters, economics, conflicts, law, and literature than he can chew. Masters has attempted to synchronize history, gossip, philosophy, psychology, and poetry. As a historian he says nothing which has not been said before in prose—and in better prose. As a philosopher he echoes the conventional tone of the post-Wilsonian dialecticians, a tone which is half skeptical, half visionary "in spite of." As a poet—well, here is a sample:

> Rage consumed the muscles of his slowing heart
> To see Wilson, the logolyrist, leading a war
> Of the world power, America.
> He became partly deaf and partly blind,
> And little days came to him day by day
> Of making speeches, and writing war articles.

The author of the most condensed portrait-epitaphs of our time has written one of the most long-winded books of our day.

L. U.

Travel

ONE MAN CARAVAN. By Robert Edison Fulton, Jr. Harcourt, Brace. 1937. $3.

At first glance one might think this just another tale of adventure by a youngster wishing to capitalize his stunts. It is not. Mr. Fulton traveled 40,000 miles, through thirty-two countries, mostly on a motorcycle, because it was cheap, swift, and convenient. He did not hesitate to take trains or boats when they served his purpose better. Through Europe to Damascus he rode and watched the various races as carefully as they, the officials particularly, watched him. He detoured to see the fierce ceremonies of the Djebel Druzes in Syria, then crossed the desert to Baghdad, miraculously meeting friends and not bandits on the way. He entered the forbidden British garrison of Razmak in the Northwest Frontier Province, and left it less easily for a spin around Afghanistan, defying regulations, of course. It is high time for travelers to learn that they have been preceded by many others in "forbidden" Afghanistan, and that that stark country is pretty well shorn of unusual adventures now; the Afghans are a predictable people, and a bullet in the skull is a commonplace.

It was commonplace, too, for Mr. Fulton to be continually arrested and clapped in jail, a lodging that was about all he could afford. It was a strenuous trip. He rode through mud most of the way, through an itinerant house in Java, and along the railroad ties over trestles when there was no other means of fording a river. Once he was obliged to use mustard oil in the motorcycle, and consequently emitted a cloud of poisonous mustard gas over all he passed. He was ditched, hit on the head by big league monkeys, and otherwise injured, but he enjoyed it, which is all that matters. He saw strange lands through the dust, and above the din made by the motorcycle, that "battle on wheels," he heard tales amusing and gruesome and brave.

There have been more remarkable tours than Mr. Fulton's (he himself met a man who was walking around the world backwards), but few have been so consistently entertaining. And few books by young men have been so negligent of the young women in foreign parts. Mr. Fulton encountered one girl at the beginning of the trip, and bathed with a whole girl's school in Japan. That seemed to suffice him, as literary lure. His book is well written, and his photographs are unexceptionally excellent.

H. D.

CIRCLING THE CARIBBEAN. By Tom Marvel. Harcourt, Brace. 1937. $2.50.

"Twelve weeks of visiting eleven islands of the West Indies, under the flags of seven nations; of calling at two South American countries, the six republics of Central America, and Mexico," make up a twentieth century American *grand tour.* And two or three days in each country or island represents twentieth century leisure. The prospective traveler who reads this travel guide will learn in advance what every tourist inevitably learns in the course of such a tour. He will hardly learn what one could wish every tourist would learn. This report will put him up on hotel meals, hotel rates, and swimming beaches, it will help him to avoid good rum in favor of better rum, and it will give him a hint of history. But he may never know that Columbus founded the first permanent settlement in the New World at Santo Domingo (lately renamed "Trujillo City" by President Trujillo), or that Santiago de Cuba has exported conquistadores as well as Bacardi in its day. This is said less by way of complaint than regret. Mr. Marvel wrote to tell Average Tourist what Average Tourist wants to know, and he has succeeded. He has done more than that, in fact, for he has embodied his information in the pleasantest, if mildest, of travel narratives, so that it can be consumed quite painlessly. "Circling the Caribbean" is excellent airplane reading.

L. J. H.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 196)

PLATO—"DIALOGUES: EUTHYPHRON"

If, then, they were going to laugh at me, ... there would be nothing unpleasant in passing some time in a court of justice, jesting and laughing, but if they are in earnest, how this affair may terminate is unknown, except to you prophets.

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Authors of the Week

Vicki Baum

When a brother of the German novelist, Jakob Wassermann, found the writing-desk of a young harpist filled with manuscript stories and novels, he was instrumental in having some of Vicki Baum's first creative works published. But not much later than this she gave up writing for six years, during which time she had two children. She was then married to her second husband (Richard Lert, the conductor of the orchestra in which she played). Vicki Baum was born in Vienna in January, 1888. She calls herself a "single child of a good family in very bourgeois surroundings," and as a child she became a musician and appeared on the concert platform. Her first marriage was at eighteen and was not successful, though she and her young husband always remained friends. Her principal early work was done in Darmstadt, South Germany. Then she accompanied her second husband on his concert tours, and finally, in 1926, went to Berlin, editing some magazines for the firm of Ullstein, which has published her novels. A young writer persuaded her to dramatize her novel, "Grand Hotel," and in 1931 she came to America to see the American performance. She fell in love with America at that time, brought over her two small boys, and established herself on the West Coast. She says that she does not smoke or drink, that her principal vice is dancing; that she likes books, music, children, and trees, and dislikes high society, politics, bridge, and important people. She is very energetic, and speaks and writes excellent English.

"Tale of Bali," by Vicki Baum, is reviewed on page 5.

James M. Bertram

Born in New Zealand, young Bertram had had experience both in politics and journalism before he took high honors in English literature at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar. After leaving Oxford he journeyed to the Orient as free-lance writer, investigating social and political developments in China and Japan. His findings made a book which he completed in May 1937 and which was published in London this October. But the American edition of "First Act in China" contains a new foreword and first chapter, sent from Peiping September last. He had arrived in Peiping just ahead of the Japanese last summer. At the beginning of what looks like a brilliant career, young Mr. Bertram has contributed a picture of events in the far East that has so far needed no emendation.

"First Act in China," by James M. Bertram, is reviewed on page 6.

Naomi Jacob

For eleven years the stage and the Labour Party in England divided the interests of one who now writes two novels a year and articles on cookery, and keeps a Pekinese dog in the luxury to which he is accustomed. Naomi Jacob was born on July 1, 1889, and educated, as she puts it, at Middlesborough High School and in the world in general. She afterward taught in a Chuch of England school, acted on the variety stage, managed a munition factory, a toy factory, and a poultry farm. During her activities as a suffragist, she was "flung down steps and into horse ponds as a result of my efforts; my health decided that I must live out of England." Two years in Italy sufficed to cure her of tuberculosis, contracted during the war. She still lives at Sirmione (Logo di Garda) where she knows every inhabitant, man, woman, and child. She is fond of animals, never takes exercise, and likes to teach other people how to cook.

"Fade Out," by Naomi Jacob, is reviewed on page 5.

Edgar Snow

Born in the Middle West and educated at a Middle Western University, Edgar Snow then stowed away to Japan, where the Japanese so complicated matters for him that he ran away again, this time to China, and started in, like most recent college graduates, as an office boy. After that, for five years he represented the Consolidated Press in China as American correspondent in Shanghai, and later the North American Newspaper Alliance, the New York *Sun*, and the London *Herald*. Today he represents the London *Herald* in Peiping. His first book, "The Far Eastern Front," was published in 1933, when he was thirty. Seven years ago he married an American writer who contributes to many magazines. They have no children. Snow was the first man to get into the Soviet district in China and the first man to come out with pictures about it, which were published in *Life*. His second book, "Living China," consisted of short stories by various Chinese, translated and edited by himself. He has contributed stories of his own to the *Saturday Evening Post, Current History, This Week, Asia,* etc. He belongs to no political group, but his sympathies are entirely with China in the present conflict.

"Red Star Over China," by Edgar Snow, is reviewed on page 6.

Erratum

In the issue of December 18 *The Saturday Review* erroneously referred to John Crowe Ransom at Vanderbilt University. Since September Mr. Ransom has been professor of English at Kenyon College.

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ARE YOU *looking for an intelligent, congenial, adaptable and idealistic male travelling companion?* Box 422-C.

Double-Crostics: No. 197

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-T	2-R	3-J	4-P	5-Q	6-K	7-Y	8-G		9-V	10-G	11-Y	12-H	13-N	14-X	15-T	
16-G	17-R	18-D	19-Q	20-H	21-K		22-G	23-K	24-X	25-L	26-H		27-U	28-H	29-B	30-O
31-R	32-D	33-I		34-G	35-R	36-A	37-U	38-S		39-U	40-A		41-J	42-T		43-N
44-B	45-Y	46-F	47-W	48-T	49-O		50-V	51-X	52-U	53-K		54-O	55-D	56-G	57-W	58-K
59-N	60-R	61-Y	62-F		63-Y	64-A	65-V	66-T	67-D		68-M		69-N	70-C	71-B	72-U
	73-I	74-B	75-D	76-C	77-E		78-Y	79-F	80-Q	81-M	82-O	83-R		84-H	85-D	86-V
	87-J	88-R	89-C	90-S	91-O	92-U		93-U	94-M	95-F		96-T	97-A	98-E	99-U	100-N
101-Q		102-M	103-U	104-F	105-C		106-L	107-E	108-K	109-M	110-I		111-H	112-O	113-N	114-S
	115-H	116-U	117-F		118-B	119-O	120-M	121-L	122-D	123-C	124-N		125-P	126-F	127-H	
128-E		129-K	130-B	131-Q	132-F		133-E	134-M		135-V	136-W	137-G	138-U		139-B	
140-Q	141-L	142-R		143-I	144-A		145-T	146-B	147-O	148-D	149-P	150-A	151-Q	152-W	153-F	
154-X	155-B	156-I	157-H		158-I		159-P	160-L	161-B	162-M		163-S	164-W	165-U	166-F	167-E
168-D	169-H	170-P	171-V		172-R	173-L		174-J	175-X	176-G	177-W	178-Y				

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 21 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Character in "Tale of Two Cities."
B. Theatrical.
C. Stop (nautical).
D. Don Quixote's horse.
E. Muster (Comp.).
F. Novel by V. Sackville-West.
G. Full of resource.
H. Composes with laborious effort.
I. Blame.
J. Hodgepodge.
K. Literary.
L. Luncheon (orig. India).
M. Author of "Miss Marjoribanks" (1828-'97).
N. A kind of leather.
O. Kill by stoning.
P. Reserved.
Q. Italian composer (1792-1868).
R. Phoenician goddess of war and fertility.
S. Goddess of victory (Gr.).
T. Bivalves of the genus Ostrea.
U. Russian painter (1842-1904).
V. Wife of Capaneas (Gr.).
W. City of Keats's birth.
X. Heroine of novel by Blackmore (first name).
Y. Surpasses.

WORDS

64 36 150 144 97 40

74 29 161 71 146 139 44 130 155 118

89 123 70 76 105

32 75 67 122 85 168 55 148 18

107 128 133 77 98 167

117 95 132 104 79 62 126 166 46 153

8 22 10 16 137 56 176 34

12 28 20 111 169 127 84 115 157 26

158 73 110 143 33 156

41 3 87 174

6 108 23 129 58 53 21

121 141 173 106 160 25

134 81 68 120 162 109 94 102

59 113 43 69 13 100 124

82 147 112 54 49 119 30 91

125 170 149 4 159

5 131 101 140 80 19 151

31 83 88 60 172 17 35 142 2

114 163 90 38

145 42 96 1 48 66 15

37 138 52 72 92 116 165 103 93 27 39 99

50 9 65 86 135 171

57 136 164 47 152 177

154 175 24 14 51

11 45 78 178 7 61 63

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

Mostly Cloudy Today

HANGOVERS make for thought. The sense of impending
Revelation, vague and awful, yet somehow splendid,
That lurks, catlike and monstrous, just beyond the ending
Of conscious cerebration, perhaps is a phantasm blended
Of gin and specious epigram in the unconscious,
Remembered in a detached and relative tranquillity;
But often it seems a cosmic attempt to launch us
Beyond the frontiers of intellectual stability.

Always the apocalypse balks, tacit but out of focus,
Around the mental corner; it mocks at definition.
Possibly there is a key as simple as a crocus,
Blooming in a city park; but a savor of contrition
Colors a symbol so obvious and sentimental.
Understanding also may come in liquor —glorious and accidental.

VINCENT STARRETT.

☞Presumably it's the effect of the holidays: whatever the cause, Old Q. feels a strong disinclination to thought. ☞His mind, at the moment, refuses to grapple with anything more difficult than the Federal Writers' Project *Almanac for New Yorkers,* 1938, a somewhat lighthearted prognostication of events for the New Year, and a compendium of historical or legendary miscellanea. This lively little calendar is one of the paperbound Modern Age Books, and sells for 25 cents. ☞At this season we begin to hanker for the annual rereading of Sherlock Holmes: we remember that it was New Year's resolutions (for the year 1881) that occupied Dr. Watson's mind as he stood at the Criterion Bar and felt that historic tap on the shoulder. To every Baker Street Irregular, the first toast of the year should be to Young Stamford (of Bart's Hospital) who introduced the immortal pair to each other. ☞In our own private collection two of the choicest items are a portrait of the actual bull-terrier that bit Sherlock Holmes at Cambridge, and the copy of Murger's *Vie de Bohème* that Dr. Watson read so inattentively one evening during the *Study in Scarlet.* ☞Holmes's own volume of George Meredith and his pocket Petrarch have never turned up, but we often scan the Scribner catalogues in hope to see them listed. ☞Some of the best chuckles of the Christmas festival were due to a rereading of A. Edward Newton's highly entertaining *Bibliography and Pseudo-Bibliography;* we enjoyed his quotation from Heine about Napoleon's marriage with Marie Louise, when "Revolution mounted the bed of an imperial blonde and polluted the 'pale sheets of the House of Hapsburg." ☞Mr. Newton says he quotes from memory; but, as he remarks later, "any fool can quote with a book before him." ☞Perhaps we can check this in Louis Untermeyer's *Heine: Paradox and Poet* which all reviewers are handsomely saluting. ☞Whenever we think of Mr. Newton we bless him for his high spirits, all the more astonishing as coming from the old P.R.R. Main Line where it is more customary to take literature somberly. ☞The new book that we heard most about last week (among people whose protuitions we respect) was Arnold's *The Folk-Lore of Capitalism.*

☞Constantine Rodocanachi's *Forever Ulysses*—to be published next week—is sure to give many readers excellent thrills and tart, sardonic amusement. The ideal commentator on this astonishing book would be William McFee, whose long Mediterranean experience and his own high coefficient of satiric mirth perfectly equip him to relish Rodocanachi's mood. ☞From Marshall Best of the Viking Press we gleaned some information about the author. Rodocanachi is an English-educated Greek from Alexandria. He says "I consider myself a curious mixture of the business man, the adventurer and the intellectual." He fought for Greece against Turkey in 1897; went into business, made and lost fortunes; was one of the leaders in the Venizelos Revolution in 1916; was military attaché in London during the World War, and a member of the Greek Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. When Venizelos failed politically, Rodocanachi returned to business, but also found time to write plays in Greek and to give lectures on political and literary subjects in Greek, English and French. This is his first novel. He insists on calling it pure fiction, though he does not deny that it was inspired by the life of Zaharoff and embellished by an episode from the life of another Greek adventurer named Capalos. Rodocanachi, himself, was the hero of H. N. Brailsford's book, *The Broom of the War God.*

☞Fred Melcher, editor of the *Publishers' Weekly,* wished to choose something as a personal gift to the President when a committee of the A.B.A. recently added 200 books to the White House library. He chose a Rudge reprint (1923) of Carlyle's *Jocelyn of Brakelonde,* from *Past and Present.* ☞A great deal of Carlyle, Old Fred observes, is more hodiernal than the latest fashionable sociologers. ☞Old Q.'s work on Sociology (on which he labors in secret) can never be untimely, for it will contain no Facts or Figures; only Ideas.

☞Shortage of space last week prevented Old Q. from mentioning his pleasure in a visit to the busily alert book department of Strawbridge and Clothier, Philadelphia, so ably managed by Mrs. Ethel Kooker. ☞And he also meant to ejaculate a note of admiration for the exceptional comeliness of the young women in the Mail Order Department of the J. B. Lippincott Company. They are tactfully kept on the second floor of the historic building on Washington Square so that visitors to the editorial office downstairs will not be distracted. ☞Thus old Penseroso begins the New Year, as he would always hope to, on a note of sentiment and aspiration.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE SIMPLE WAY OF POISON *Leslie Ford* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Triple envenoming (1 canine) in distracted Washington family solved by keenly observant Col. Primrose, with Sgt. Buck standing by.	Beautifully plotted and excellently characterized. Emotions occasionally ride off in all directions — but that's a small matter.	Hard to beat
THE WHISTLING HANGMAN *Baynard H. Kendrick* (Crime Club: $2.)	Shrill-voiced death invades super-select hotel, Blind detective Maclain, and faithful German shepherd dogs, corner unsuspected killer.	Barring occasional stretches of credibility—and slightly shadowy criminal — tale has unique murder method and other good points.	Out-of-ordinary
THE SWING MUSIC MURDER *Harlan Reed* (Dutton: $2.)	Detective Jordan, heroically laying off liquor, threads mazes of modern music to killer of swing-band leader and woman.	Rough language, tough tactics, some inside dope on "swing," much pooshing around, and refreshingly unfamiliar Seattle background.	Rambunctious
MURDER ON MARGIN *Robert George Dean* (Crime Club: $2.)	Unusual activity of corpus delicti puts Pat Thompson (Susan Barnes assisting) on trail of slayer of broker and sweetie.	Chucklesome improprieties and good gagging serve as effective screen for puzzle that adepts may solve early in the game.	Fair

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